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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

Events of the Week.

THE "Terra Nova" has returned to New Zealand, bringing with her what is, perhaps, the bravest and also the most tragical story in the long record of polar exploration. Captain Scott and four companions reached the South Pole on January 18th, 1912, one month after Amundsen, whose traces they found there. They all perished on the homeward journey, and it is plain that their chivalrous care for those of the party who fell ill by the way, combined with ill-luck and unparalleled bad weather, was the real cause of the disaster. The tale has been told for us in a brief and affecting narrative, written just before the end by Captain Scott. The ponies on which he relied in place of dogs were, on the whole, a failure. So many died on the journey south that the party had to restrict the stores it carried. Bad weather and heavy gales delayed their pace. Soft snow was encountered in the glacier region, and this caused the worst delays of all. "We fought these untoward events with a will," writes Captain Scott, "and conquered, but it ate into our provision reserve."

PETTY-OFFICER EVANS was the first of the party to fall sick on the return journey. His illness caused further delay, and ultimately he died of concussion of

the brain. On the ice-barrier, as they neared the end, temperatures of unparalleled severity prevailed, with continuous head-winds. Then Captain Oates fell ill, realised that he was endangering the whole party while they waited to tend him, and quietly went out one morning from the tent into the blizzard, remarking "I am just going outside, and I may be some time." It was a noble gift of life, "the act," as Captain Scott puts it, "of a brave man and an English gentleman." There survived now only Dr. Wilson, the chief of the scientific staff, Lieutenant Bowers, and Captain Scott. They struggled on with food for two days and fuel for one meal, but the blizzard forced them to camp, and when the letter was written they had been unable for four days to leave the tent. Here they perished, only eleven miles from the last of their depôts, at which they would have found stores enough to carry them to safety.

THE document reflects in a brave and stoical spirit on their fatal adventure. Captain Scott writes that he "does not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardship, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past." There is nothing to add to the epitaph which this brave man wrote on the eve of death upon comrades who were worthy of him. The nation has been stirred by this superb but terrible record, as it rarely has been by any event in our recollection. Captain Scott's appeal—"surely a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent upon us are properly provided for"—has aroused at once a practical response. "It will not fall on deaf ears," said Mr. Asquith in reply to a question in the House. A memorial fund has been started from the Mansion House, and the sympathy for Mrs. Scott, who is on her way to meet her husband, is universal. The King attended the memorial service at St. Paul's on Friday.

A NOTABLE advance was made by two Ministerial speeches delivered at a sitting of the Reichstag's Budget Committee on Friday last. The Committee sits in private, and only the baldest summary has been published. Herr von Jagow, the new Foreign Secretary, after referring generally to Germany's good relations with other Powers, said that her relations with Great Britain were "particularly good." Admiral von Tirpitz dealt with the speech of Mr. Churchill last March, and its announcement that for some years to come we shall build Dreadnoughts in the ratio of sixteen to Germany's ten. The Minister declared that he "would raise no objection to the standard in question." German newspaper comments emphasise the importance of this new departure, and even extreme partisans of a strong navy accept the proportion and think it suffices to ensure Germany against wanton attack. The Liberal papers even insist that our Colonial ships must not be reckoned in any grudging spirit, though some Conservative writers are anxious on this score. The "Frankfurter Zeitung," and also the "Kölnische Zeitung," distinguish between this statement of intention and anything which could be called an agreement. The Socialist comment is that

militarism on land is too costly to permit of the continuance of the race at sea.

In this country the speech has been received with as much relief as in Germany. The only jarring note is struck by Mr. Garvin, and even he argues rather for a bigger navy as an end in itself than for an aggressively anti-German policy. The "Times" and the "Morning Post" are cautious, but write, none the less, with good feeling, and welcome the change in Anglo-German relations. The organised anti-German tendencies have now hardly a voice in the press. The French patriotic press is suspicious and alarmed, dreading a concentration of Germany's efforts on land. The "Temps" reads them a lecture for this nervousness, and professes to minimise the significance of the speech, but itself joins in the demand for the maximum in French military preparations. The semi-official "Rossia" is frankly displeased. The main fact is that public opinion, alike in England and Germany, is unfeignedly and almost unanimously content. We fully expect from Mr. Churchill a cordial response to the German advance.

THE prevailing guess regarding the rather mysterious course of the Thracian campaign is that the Bulgarians are tempting the Turks to undertake the offensive in the hope of destroying them if they should advance far from their base. The withdrawal of the Bulgarian lines from before Tchataldja has in fact induced the Turks to venture on some reconnaissances in force. It is said that these were repulsed with heavy losses, but the Turks are none the less repairing the railway beyond their lines. They have also withdrawn large bodies of men whom they hope to disembark, perhaps at Eregli, whence they might have taken the former Bulgarian lines in the rear. It was probably to meet this move and not with the hope of deluding the Turks, that the Bulgarian front was drawn back at its south-western end. The one big event of the renewed campaign has been a Bulgarian victory at the neck of the Gallipoli peninsula. The Turks marched out from their old earth-works at Bulair to meet the Bulgarian advance, and it is very positively stated in Sofia that they were heavily defeated, and left 6,000 dead on the field.

THE Bulgarians have as yet made no attempt to follow up this advantage at Gallipoli, perhaps because they fear an attack from the sea in their rear. They have already repulsed one attempt of the Turks to land behind them at Sharkeui, a notable exploit, since they had only their mountain batteries to meet the heavy guns of the Turkish fleet. There is no news yet of any landing by the Allies on the unprotected north shore of the Peninsula, nor, indeed, of any Greek naval co-operation in this Bulgarian adventure. A Turkish cruiser has gone ashore on the Black Sea coast north of Derkos, and the Bulgarians have been able to prevent attempts to tow her off. The joint Servian and Montenegrin forces claim some little success at Scutari, but there is no news of any important happenings at Adrianople. Meantime, Hakki Pasha, an ex-Vizier, has left Constantinople on a peace mission, and part of his plans apparently included an ingenuous attempt to bribe this country with concessions in Mesopotamia.

WE note one or two landmarks of the academic debate in the House of Lords on Welsh Disestablishment which ended on Thursday night in a futile vote against the second reading of 252 peers against 51. Both the Archbishops opposed the measure, root and branch, and urged the House not to amend but to reject

it, the Primate on the characteristic ground that the Welsh opposition might, in the course of years, weaken, and that the religious units were gradually drawing together. The Bishop of St. Asaph made a clever *ad hoc* plea, and though the Government's case was thinly supported, its broader political aspects were well stated by Lord Beauchamp. But the moral and intellectual interest of the debate almost entirely centred in the speeches of the Bishop of Hereford and the Bishop of Oxford. Both favored disestablishment and a much modified scheme of disendowment. Dr. Percival declared for a scheme of concurrent endowment.

DR. GORE added an acute examination of the real against the supposed need of church defence. Insisting that no church could stand against a nation which said that they did not want it as their religious organ, and tracing the Church's gradual loss of the State connection, he compared, very unfavorably, the directing forces and later history of the French with the Anglican Church. The disestablished French Church had put spiritual principles first, the English Church "position and finance," State "shackles and bonds." He added:—

"I regret profoundly that in our day, when if anything is true it is true that there is going on in our Church a doctrinal disintegration unparalleled in our history, when, if things go on as they are going now, it will not be possible in a generation to come to say what the Church of England stands for, we are trying to keep the Church of England together by flying for refuge to establishment when we ought to be undergoing the trouble of ascertaining what our principles are, and whether we mean to stand by them. I believe that the tendency to run away from principles to institutions is a great disaster."

THE renewal of the attack on the Territorials in the House of Lords on Monday was chiefly notable for Lord Roberts's admission as to the true object of his policy. In the course of his speech, Lord Roberts conceded that the danger he had in view was not so much the risk of leaving the country without regular troops at a time of war, as the

"danger of the position in which Great Britain would be placed if the balance of power in Europe were not maintained. One of the chief reasons for our keeping up an expeditionary force is to enable us to take our share in maintaining that balance; but, unfortunately, it has never been explained to the people what the balance of power in Europe means to us. Consequently, there are no arrangements for meeting the demands that would be made upon our military resources in the event of our having to take part in a war on the Continent."

This is a valuable confession, which makes it impossible for Lord Roberts to shelter himself, as in the past, behind invasion scares. He reveals himself as the advocate of a crude, unthought-out Jingo policy, and as beating up for a force adequate to maintain it.

THE debate contained some minor features of interest. Lord Herschell stated, in answer to Lord Midleton's question as to whether the Territorials could guarantee our safety against a raid of 70,000 troops, that the "Government held the view that they could now guarantee under any present circumstances that this country could be safeguarded against a blow delivered at its heart." This guarantee was backed by the General Staff and the Army Council. The case for conscription was powerfully argued down by Lord Haldane. The Territorials who, under Lord Roberts's efforts, have declined to 263,000, will probably this year sink to 230,000 or 240,000. To bring up the number, the Government apparently intend to encourage the

incorporation of the National Reserve, which possesses over 100,000 men under forty-five years of age, for service in time of national peril. And they appear inclined to do something in the way of the compulsory training of cadets, a policy in which we hope they will move with caution.

* * *

WE should like to dissociate the question of the Marconi inquiry from party spirit, but we have a very clear and strong opinion as to the point of journalistic ethics arising out of it. The attacks in the "National Review" and the "Outlook"—to name no other papers—have had one special meaning and intention. That is, to associate Cabinet Ministers, and especially Mr. Lloyd George, with secret and therefore corrupt dealings in Marconi shares at the time of their inflation. This insinuation has appeared in a score of forms in both these journals, though it has never been clearly and openly affirmed. A Committee of the House of Commons has been appointed to examine both the general expediency of the Marconi contract—on which we now express no opinion—and these charges of corruption. This Committee are actually accused by one gentleman—Mr. Maxse—of being "reluctant" to get at "facts."

* * *

THE Committee have now reached the point of their inquiry at which they demand the facts. The answer is a point-blank refusal. The pitiable Mr. Lawson indeed denies that there are any to give. So in effect do Mr. Oliver and Mr. Guinness. The Editor of the "Outlook" goes further and disowns all personal responsibility. Mr. Oliver did not think that if a journalist made a charge, even of corruption, he was bound to prove it. Such a necessity, he insisted, would make the task of a political journalist impossible. This is a rather shocking statement; but Mr. Maxse's position is worse still.

* * *

ON Wednesday he repeated the insinuations of corrupt dealing on the part of Ministers in Marconi shares, weaving a loose tissue of gossip from City men and politicians, and even adding, in the case of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a malicious suggestion that Mr. George had neglected to contradict the rumors. At the same time he avoided actual libel, and denied that the word "corruption" was properly applied to his statements. Mr. Parker then asked him to produce letters in which he alleged that these statements were made, and to name the persons making them. Both these requests he refused, and his refusal has been reported to the House, which will deal with the matter when the new session begins and the Committee is re-appointed. Some of the evidence he admits he has destroyed, all of it he withholds, on the ground that editors cannot in honor disclose communications made to them confidentially.

* * *

It is not surprising that the "Times" comes to the rescue of Mr. Maxse, and insists on the obligation of an editor to withhold information thus obtained. This attitude recalls the action of the "Times" itself in the matter of the Pigott forgeries. The "Times" then refused disclosure of the source of the forged letters, though it must have known that the moment Pigott's name was mentioned its case would dissolve in a roar of derisive laughter. In such an issue, therefore, it has lost the right to speak for journalism.

* * *

OUR own view is that journalists possess no more privilege of withholding proof of calumnious statements

they have made than any ordinary citizen. Were it otherwise, every slipshod libeller and notoriety hunter, every careless or malicious *gobemouche* of an editor, would be on velvet. If a journalist makes charges, he must, on demand, either substantiate or withdraw them. Mr. Maxse does neither. He has destroyed some of his so-called evidence, he conceals the rest; and, though he builds up his house of cards over again, verifies nothing. All this mud, therefore, is just left to stick, while the editor, knowing, or pretending to know, who threw it, runs away, and neither produces his witnesses, nor attempts to prove his case without them. This is all the more incumbent on him if he says, as he has a right to say, that he cannot honorably disclose the names of his informants. We write with no personal feeling, but we are convinced that if journalism creeps behind this kind of earthwork, its power is gone.

* * *

AFTER nearly two years of qualified power, during which the most one could say of it was that it had not been threatened in the capital, the new Mexican Government is at grips with a formidable counter-revolution. General Felix Diaz, the nephew of the ex-Dictator, after the failure of his attempt at Vera Cruz, had been imprisoned (a mild punishment for Mexico) in the capital. He was released with the popular General Reyes by mutinous soldiers, and at their head contrived to seize the citadel or arsenal. President Madero retained control of his residence, and has managed to summon some loyal troops and rural guards to his aid. But there was evidently a wide-spread conspiracy, and it seems probable that General Diaz has also received reinforcements.

* * *

CONSTANT fighting has been kept up daily since Saturday, with much slaughter on both sides, and General Reyes is among the killed. Apparently, the rebels, who had at first the advantage of surprise, have latterly been defending their position in the arsenal. The artillery fire has done much damage to property, and a few American subjects have been accidentally killed or wounded. The Washington Cabinet threatens intervention to protect American lives, and an expedition to Mexico City is talked of. Warships have sailed for Vera Cruz. It is too soon to pronounce any judgment on President Madero's *régime*, but no disinterested European who knows the facts about the Diaz despotism and the plantation slavery, which was the basis of its financial prosperity, can desire to see it restored.

* * *

THE Government have wisely decided to grant a Royal Commission to inquire into the conduct of the India Office. The Prime Minister gave this pledge in summing up on Thursday a debate, raised by Mr. Gwynne, who asked for a Select Committee. Mr. Bonar Law, who also spoke, disclaimed the idea of "corruption" in connection with the recent buying of silver by Messrs. S. Montagu for the Indian Government, but thought that such privileges had better not be given to a firm closely connected with members of the Ministry—an opinion in which many Liberals will concur. The Government's case is that the public interest required secret recourse to Messrs. Montagu in order to prevent the raising against them of the price of silver, and Mr. Baker stated that the State had thus saved £175,000. Another point which the Commissioners will have in view is the desirability of allowing the financial experts who advise the India Office to be connected with banks with which the Department does business. Mr. Samuel informed the House that he had had nothing to do with the purchase of the silver, and did not even know that it was taking place.

Politics and Affairs.

THE ANGLO-GERMAN APPROACH.

DURING the long series of years in which Anglo-German rivalry has seemed to be the pivot of the European situation, two distant ambitions have formed themselves in Liberal minds—that the group system among the Great Powers should come to an end, and the rivalry in armaments cease by mutual agreements. But our immediate concern was that some conjunction of events should invite or even compel the two Powers to co-operate as leaders in a work of peace. We remember, with undiminished distaste, the last piece of common work which stood to their credit before this long misunderstanding. It was the coercion of Venezuela, a use of force in the interests of finance against a contemptible government, which might, if we had pursued it wholeheartedly, have ruined our relations with the United States. It was something quite other than this which was needed to establish a better relationship, a piece of work finer in its motive, larger in its scope, and destined to win the gratitude of other civilised peoples. The chance came when Italy made her predatory attack on Tripoli, and that chance was missed. It came again when the Balkan Allies felt that the sands had run low in the Turkish hour-glass, and it was not fully used. It was repeated when the Near Eastern crisis threatened to involve Austria and Russia, and at length the gravity of the peril brought with it the necessary stimulus. In the long tension of this crisis Berlin and London have learned to know each other, and the knowledge has brought only respect for each other's loyalty in action and good-will in purpose. The inevitable consequence has followed, and a revision of a relationship so long unhappy and threatening is now in full process of accomplishment. The speeches, of which, unluckily, we know only the drift, delivered last week by Herr von Jagow and Admiral von Tirpitz to the Budget Committee of the Reichstag, are a welcome and generous recognition of a fact which hardly stood in need of emphasis. The new Foreign Secretary congratulated the deputies, whom he was addressing in private, on the particularly good relations which his country now entertains with ours. The Naval Minister followed him with an announcement that he was perfectly prepared to accept the ratio of British superiority over German building in battleships which Mr. Churchill laid down last March.

It would be easy to read too much into this speech, and equally easy to miss its immense significance. It is not precisely an agreement about naval armaments. Certainly the German press, with hardly a shade of difference, is unanimous in repudiating that interpretation. It is like Mr. Churchill's overture, a definition of policy and a statement of intention. It might be modified in subsequent years for any good ground without a breach of faith. It is of value, chiefly because we have learned to recognise the change of attitude of which it is one of the expressions. In concrete fact it means, presumably, as the "Temps" guesses, that Germany has no intention of increasing her battleship programme. Many motives have contributed to that decision—her

financial stringency, the difficulty of managing a Reichstag in which the Centre and the Socialists have a majority if divergent interests should throw them reluctantly together, and finally the purely Continental anxieties which have reminded Germans that the army is their real line of defence. All these considerations have doubtless reinforced the argument drawn from the welcome improvement in Anglo-German relations. The positive fact is that for the present a ratio of sixteen to ten is accepted by Germany, and no effort will be made by additional building to test our determination to meet an increase by one proportionately larger. The formula is necessarily one of temporary convenience. We may not always be able to meet all the facts of our position at sea by measuring our strength solely against that of Germany. A more awkward complication is caused by the offer of the Canadian and Malayan Dreadnoughts, which apparently are to stand outside this European arithmetic. Neither in our interests nor in those of the Colonies ought this ambiguity to continue. But on our reading of the position, the two Powers have passed beyond the stage at which each sits doing jealous sums with the others' keels and broadsides. The new situation is that Germany, through the mouth of the man who incarnates her ambition to play a great part on the seas, has frankly accepted the fact of our naval predominance, and even of our naval predominance in the immense ratio of sixteen to ten. There ends, one would suppose, for any British Imperialist who is neither a victim of the mania of persecution nor a shareholder in an armament firm, the suspicion that Germany is bent in our time on a practical policy of challenging our safety at sea.

We are very far, even with this immense gain, from a satisfactory position in the matter either of diplomacy or of armaments. The waste of national resources continues. The leaguings of the Great Powers in two groups still persists, though it persists within a happily restored Concert. But an active Anglo-German rivalry is no longer the central fact. It might not be too much to say that an active Anglo-German co-operation is the main fact, and is likely to be so while the Near Eastern crisis continues. The danger comes now from quite another quarter. We are afraid that the antagonism between Austria and Russia is based on memories, suspicions, and perhaps on ambitions, too deep-seated to be removed by such a courteous overture as the Emperor Francis Joseph made last week to the Tsar. Austria has become so far a Slavonic Power that her relations with Russia are now in danger not so much from a racial antagonism between German and Slav as from a rivalry for the future leadership in the Slav world. The defeat of the democratic movement in Russia seems to have revived at the Court and in the army some faint echo of the old Pan-Slavist passions. Finance has seen its chance of exploiting sentiment, and is busy with projects for acclimatising Russian capital (presumably borrowed) in the Balkans. Even the art of the younger men in Russia involves a turning back to ancient native models, and a rejection of all that is alien and European. It is also believed, we do not know on what evidence, that there has been some real qualitative improvement in

the Russian army since the Manchurian War. When one adds that the Russian Navy, should its vast programme ever be realised, will be as formidable in the Baltic as ill-manned ships can ever be, it is easy to understand that the German Powers have other pre-occupations more pressing than our supremacy at sea. Nor can one ignore in such a survey the marked change of tone which has occurred in recent years in French feeling. The cult of patriotism in a military dress is once more the fashion, and its literary prophets, who spoke only to a clique the other day, have now the ear of society and youth. A nation must be interested in something. It must have some purpose if it lives at all. The temporary bankruptcy of Radicalism has killed all keenness for social reform, even one might say, for internal politics. If only because it abhors a vacuum, the French mind has turned with something of its recurring romantic enthusiasm to the army and the pursuit of military efficiency.

In such a situation an Anglo-German approach is the beginning of safety, but it is only the beginning. At a crisis, each Power may save the world's peace by putting pressure on its own allies and friends. That is, perhaps, for the moment the best use that can be made of the evil system of groups and alliances, and, for some years, the utmost for which we can hope is the gradual penetration of one group by the other. In our intercourse with Germany progress will be lasting and fruitful precisely in proportion as we are able to carry France with us. That aim involves that there must be no rupture of the tie which links us to her. But the ultimate peace of Europe depends more on the linking of France and Germany by common interests than on any other single factor. So long as France, a lending Power, maintains for sentimental and political reasons the unnatural exclusion of Germany, a borrowing Power, from her money markets, so long will the instability in the Continental balance continue. We do not see the possibility of any *détente* in Franco-German relations based on a slackening of their military preparations. A Continental Power may set before itself any standard of shipbuilding, great or small. But on land, since the adoption of universal service, there can be only one standard of safety—the maximum. Disarmament, when at last it comes, will be rather the conversion of these armies into militias than their reduction or disbandment. It is in the economic field that the hope lies of a Franco-German *rapprochement*. It was here that M. Caillaux all but found it, and here it must be sought again. There will not be to-morrow the fear which haunted our diplomacy yesterday that France might, by an economic bond, be drawn within the orbit of German diplomacy. The aim of every man of good-will must be to draw an orbit broad and generous enough to include all three Powers, and to draw it so that no one shall ask of this diplomatic solar system which is sun and which is planet.

THE MEANING OF CONSCRIPTION.

WE suppose that Lord Roberts is satisfied, not with Monday's debate on compulsory service in the House of

Lords—which crushed his arguments, such as they were—but with the figures as to the decline in the numbers of the Territorial Force he and his friends drew from the Government. They reveal the undoubted fact that Lord Roberts's endeavor to discourage and de-populate that interesting experiment in patriotic service has had a considerable success. The Government aimed at an establishment of 315,000 men. They have only got 263,000. Next year the 263,000 will probably have declined further to 230,000. This pattern soldier and his associates of the National Service League will thus have deprived the country of the support of some 85,000 young men, who might otherwise have been trained to the use of arms. Our nurses of the martial spirit have not indeed compassed their second object as thoroughly as their first. They not only depreciated the strength of the Territorial Army; they impugned its military character and efficiency. But Lord Herschell's interesting speech clearly shows that these have increased. Lord Roberts's dying campaign therefore has not reached its real point of attack. The Territorial Army, as it stands, is a fairly adequate machine. It was not designed, as he seems to think, to enable this country to maintain the balance of power in Europe. It was set on foot to meet a special emergency, which the Defence Committee allowed to be an off-chance in a serious war—namely, that on an outside calculation a force of 70,000 men might escape the vigilance of our fleets, and effect a landing. To meet that distant contingency—we do not know whether the Defence Committee now accepts its possibility—a British Executive would have the 263,000 Territorials *plus* 190,000 seasoned National Reservists, or as many of the younger members of this force as might be incorporated in the larger unit. If the expeditionary force had not left these shores—and it would not leave them until the Navy had established the command of the sea, *i.e.*, until the Territorials had been for some weeks or months under arms—it must also be reckoned as a factor in our defensive strength.

Is that an adequate answer or is it not? Lord Midleton asked the country to remember what 20,000 Boers did against us in Natal. If Lord Midleton means that five Englishmen defending their country against one German or Russian cannot do what one Boer did against nearly two Englishmen, we cannot compliment him on his store of national spirit. Had Lord Roberts's speeches anything to do with Lord Roberts's policy, there would indeed be no point in his complaints of the gaps in the Territorial ranks. The Government have nearly all the auxiliary soldiers they want for the purpose for which they collected them. If Lord Roberts had held his tongue and the Tory peers on the County Associations had done their duty, we should have had them all. But while Lord Roberts takes for his mill all the grist that he can get out of the fear of invasion, he and his school are not thinking of invasion at all. They are thinking of a military power to enable us to "take our share in maintaining" the balance of power in Europe. They are not really asking the lads of Hampshire and Sussex to brave death in defence of their native downs and commons. The graves

that will be dug, if conscription comes in, will line the slopes of the Vosges or the meadow-flats of Holland. What is to become of India, or the garrisons, or any of the strictly Imperial purposes for which the existing British army was constructed, and for which Lord Roberts, when he was Commander-in-Chief, had to administer it, this controversialist does not say. All these theorists build on the notion that there is an unlimited supply of British lads for soldiering. They ask for more here and more there, forgetting that not only do we sustain the greatest Navy in the world, and the greatest existing army for over-seas and tropical service—a use to which no conscript army is or ever will be adaptable—but that we have to work to keep the people of these isles from starving. Lord Haldane showed, not without a proper touch of contempt, that Lord Roberts's proposals and Lord Roberts's friends' proposals would bankrupt the British Exchequer. They would also suck dry the springs of British industry. But, first of all, they would ruin recruiting for the regular army, and they would send half-manned to sea the ships on which alone our immunity from invasion depends. Their conscript army might then put up an admirable defence against the Teuton or Slav incursionists within, let us say, a week of the capitulation of a famished and beaten country.

We may therefore well concentrate on Lord Roberts's awkward admission that he wants the country to muster in war-array, not to save itself from invasion, but to maintain the balance of power in Europe. The material equivalent of this policy would be, as Lord Haldane says, a body of 300,000 men, which would destroy the expeditionary force and the Indian army. Its cost would be about £30,000,000. Such a conception ignores the strength of this country, which is (a) its insular position and the naval power that is built on it, and (b) its freedom from the fiscal and industrial burden of conscription, and invites it to lean on its weakness, which is the military art, and to venture on an untried and unnatural form of military organisation. It is opposed by our sailors and invented by a soldier, who is unable to state it with candor or clearness, and who possesses no political knowledge or aptitude. Its only weight in the minds of the half-thinkers who have adopted it is that it represents an appeal to the moral force of an industrial nation, leading sedentary lives in over-crowded industrial centres.

The plea of decadence is, to our mind, much exaggerated. We developed our industry too quickly and on wrong lines, and we suffer for it. But decadence is a disease of leisure, not of work, and every civilised community is in its mass and main fibre a body of workers. The members of Lord Roberts's class are doubtless a prey to it, and the special forms of their neurosis may be studied at half the "smart" dinner tables in Pall Mall. But they do not infect the nation. Even if they did, a remedy for physical degeneration exists, not only in the national culture of athletics, but in the many popular forms of semi-military training for youths—cadet corps, boy scouts, rifle clubs, and the rest. But what does this nation of "decadents" do? It does not indeed stretch its youth

on the vicious seed-bed of barrack life. But it maintains over a million men in arms, voluntary traders in the art of war. Every year it dispatches from these shores or maintains on its coasts scores of thousands of seamen, fishermen, explorers, colonists, from the stuff of which armies are made. No other Empire or country does anything approaching its feats in manly and semi-warlike adventure, or ever did. What, then, remains of the case for forcing this willing steed into harness unsuited and oppressive to it? We already have a quarter of a million Territorials, more thoroughly drilled and better marksmen than were the old Volunteers. But there is a deficit of a few thousand men—for which we have mainly to thank Lord Roberts—and possibly a more serious deficit of training. If, as we said a few weeks ago, money and organisation are wanted to make good this small and measurable want, the Government should freely provide them, and the Liberal Party will not grudge them. But on one point let there be no mistake at all. Lord Lansdowne begged that the question of military service should not be made a party question. We understand the anxiety of a party leader, already burdened with one hopeless proposition, to avoid entanglement with another. But so long as the Tory Party goes on coquetting with conscription, so long will Liberals make it a matter of party. They have no alternative, for it strikes at almost every principle of Liberalism, and if it were adopted, the practice of Liberal ideas would cease. For its first fruits would be a European war, and the party that would arise from the ruin of such a conflict would not be Liberal, and if it were, it might well have no Empire to influence.

THE BEST FRUITS OF THE INSURANCE ACT.

WHAT bears the appearance of undesigned, or, if we may coin the term, sub-designed, coincidence plays an important part in public affairs. It is perhaps the element of method in what often seems the madness of politics. A striking example of this truth will be afforded by the operation of the Insurance Act. Even its friends, at the outset, were fain to admit that its most conspicuous defect was the comparatively small stress it laid on the preventive as compared with the curative side of the medical art. Hostile critics went so far as to assert that it would act rather as a premium on ill-health and the careless habits which engender it. The Fabian Society in particular levelled their keenest shafts at this alleged neglect of prevention. Though Mr. George never would admit that there was any plausibility in such criticism, not a few friends of the Act thought that more financial provision might have been made for hygiene.

But no sooner is the Act in operation than it is becoming evident to all how wide of the mark most of such criticism has been. In the first place, it alters radically the play of motives in the conduct of large masses of the insured classes, on the one hand, and of the doctors who attend them, on the other. Large numbers of working men and women, who formerly could never "afford to be ill" and to be laid aside for a few weeks, are now enabled to afford it. Their habit of keeping up

and about on damaged health was bad economy, both from their own standpoint and that of society. It often meant permanent debility or else an utter breakdown. Apart from such cases, the general practice of most workers has led them to neglect all the warning symptoms of a serious illness, thus adding to its injury and its duration when they could stand out against it no longer. A good deal of what employers and their doctors have called "malingering" will now be recognised as belonging to that reasonable care which every member of the well-to-do classes exercises on his own behalf. Domestic servants will no longer be expected to go about and do their work with a racking headache or a high temperature, unmistakably denoting influenza or some other injurious sickness. The breadwinner of the family will no longer know that lying up means a stoppage of all means of support and a heaping up of debt to doctor and chemist.

The inducement to take every illness in hand at the beginning instead of in the middle is the first important economy of prevention. This same policy every doctor on the panels will be driven, not only by professional duty but by sheer self-interest, to reinforce. Paid the same fee, whether the insured person is well and requires no attention, or ill and requires much attention, he will be impelled to do all he can to keep his clients out of his visiting-book. This change of motive must, in time, revolutionise the whole mental attitude of doctors towards their art. At present that art consists mainly in treating the symptoms of particular cases upon the lines of general practice. Called in at the acute stage of some attack, and driven to prescribe upon a hasty and a necessarily superficial diagnosis, they can hardly do otherwise. The attitude of a medical man practising entirely or mainly among insured persons will be quite different. His position will be that of a man placed in regular charge of the health of a section of the public. His patients will mostly lie in particular localities and belong to the same social grades. It will be his duty and his interest to study and to understand, not only the general conditions and habits of life of the patients on his list, but the hygiene of their environment, both as regards employment and home life. For only by such understanding will he be able to earn a decent income without being overdriven.

The doctor will thus come clearly to realise that his main business is to prevent people from getting ill, and that in order to do so he must co-operate heartily with every other agency engaged in this same work. One great merit of the Insurance Act, then, is that it will induce all the doctors on the local committees and the panels to throw the weight of their united influence into developing and correlating the various instruments of public health already in existence. The particular knowledge they will acquire of special localities and strata of the working population will be eminently serviceable to the Medical Officer of Health, with whom they will be brought into far closer touch than at present by the new stimulus to take an interest in the preventive work which is his special sphere. The various organisations, official or voluntary, engaged in the pre-natal and post-natal care of infants and their mothers, in the inspection,

medical aid, and feeding of school children, associations for housing reform, open spaces, and healthy recreation, will all be welcomed by the intelligent insurance doctors as serviceable helpers.

Above all, the great social evils of drink, prostitution, and gambling, which consume the health and the resources of large numbers of working-folk, poisoning body and mind, and lowering the vitality of whole families, can no longer be ignored by the great majority of practitioners. The greater independence which the panel doctors by co-operation can acquire, will not only enable but impel them to speak out more plainly on all these vital issues of physical and moral health, and to take a leading part in educative and practical schemes for dealing with them. The very features which most offended the traditional conservatism of the profession, the breaking up of the privacy and individualism which characterised the relations of doctor and patient, will soon become recognised as important conditions of progress, both for preventive and curative medicine. For the gradual substitution of amicable co-operation for the cut-throat competition which has so long prevailed among the poorer grades of practitioners, will introduce a serviceable measure of specialism and a more truly scientific spirit into the study and practice of medicine and of surgery. Too much mere routine upon the one hand, too much hazard and guess-work on the other, have been the inevitable defects of the older medical practice. There will now be furnished both opportunity and stimulus for the insurance doctor to keep in contact with the fresh knowledge of his time, and to draw more freely upon the co-operation of other members of his profession. The wider outlook, not merely upon his profession, but upon life itself, which will come with the pressure of the preventive standpoint must be a liberalising agency that, in its turn, will react in an increased intellectual efficiency of the whole profession.

THE SERVICE OF CAPTAIN SCOTT.

WE do not know that it is the business of writers to invite the nation to mourn such a death as that of Captain Scott and his companions. It is given to some men to live well, and to others to die well, and all States, new and old, have recognised that in the heroic passing of their sons lies a means of enriching their common memories and renewing their activities and hopes. Lincoln said of the soldiers of Gettysburg that the world would little note nor long remember what he said, but that it would never forget what they did. He was wrong; the word of the orator has had a longer and more memorable life than the deed they immortalised. Captain Scott's death needs no such commemoration. Remote and uninhabitable wastes of Nature enshrine and dignify it for ever; and not less the courage of the victim's end and the simplicity of his character. Captain Scott neither sought death nor desired it. He aimed at giving his country her share in the disclosure of the earth's untold secrets, and in the roll of honor that is made and re-made with each year in which that story grows a little more familiar. In this sense he gave his life for hers, as every deed and every thought which is not self-

centred, while it dissipates the individual existence, builds up the spiritual framework of mankind. For at once it releases a host of softening and ennobling influences in the State. The young and the susceptible learn of and from it. Their elders observe the broader flow into which the narrow current of egoistic living is destined to fall and be lost. Life for money-making or pleasure-taking shrinks to its proper measure before a worthy example of life-losing. Most of such sacrifices pass unnoticed; they are incidents in the normal devotion of the high-minded and the instructive and uncomplaining service of the good. The precise character of such action is of less importance than its redemption of the world from mean hopelessness and low-thoughted care. It was well for one country in Europe that she won the way to the South Pole. It is better for another that her chosen son won the prize and lost it.

A London Diary.

I BELIEVE that the Marconi Committee were absolutely unanimous in their decision to report Mr. Maxse's conduct to the House.

I THINK we were all surprised to find Germany speaking so early and so clearly against a further anti-British extension of her Fleet Law. But the betterment of the general working relations of the two countries was no secret, and has been going on ever since the Morocco incident closed. No doubt the increase of the Russian Army, the growing Jingoism of the French, of which our statesmen cannot but be sensible, and also the alarming pressure of taxes, have all had something to do with this change of tone, of which Bethmann-Hollweg has been the chief promoter and the Haldane visit the first decisive incident.

STILL more significant was the German conduct of the Balkan negotiations. "Most honest, most loyal, most straightforward," was a description of the German dispatches given me by one who saw them. Practically the two countries acted together for peace, and led Europe together. The result, and the method of obtaining it, naturally impressed so upright a mind as Sir Edward Grey's. Perhaps it is not too much to say that it converted him into a strong worker for a definite European settlement, based, but not, of course, dependent only on, an understanding on armaments. If he achieves this, his Foreign Secretaryship becomes the most distinguished of his time. And it may obviously be a vital work of salvage for civilisation. A booming European trade can just bear its present burdens without revolution; how would a pinched and half-idle world-industry bear greater ones still?

ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ's statement has, of course, been received with the greatest possible satisfaction by Liberals. Had it not been the last week in the session, I am told that members would have given some formal expression of their appreciation of this definite step

towards the establishment of a complete understanding with Germany and the restriction of expenditure on armaments.

POOR Captain Scott! There is some evidence of miscarriage in his plans, and yet those who knew him, and were struck by his careful, meticulous regard for details, and his minute supervision of them, do not think of blaming him. His expedition was marvellously equipped, with a lavish recourse to science. But it and its leader had one serious handicap. It started with a heavy debt, which was to be redeemed by lectures and journalistic and literary writings. Scott did not get his money easily, and was not a little worried by the pressure this part of his task put upon him, and he did not have enough by many thousands of pounds. Not a very creditable fact.

A WOMAN SUFFRAGE BILL will be drafted and ready at the very beginning of next Session. The Liberal Suffragist Committee, representing by far the largest body of suffragists in the House, have consulted representatives of other groups and decided on the lines of the new measure. As their Bill will have the largest backing, it will be selected by the Government as the Bill for which facilities will be given. It seems clear that a measure drafted on the lines of the Dickinson No. 2 Bill will have the best chance of getting a substantial majority on second reading. If by a simple amendment it can be restricted to the proportions of the Conciliation Bill, those who are in favor of the limited franchise will get their chance of testing the feeling of the House in Committee. If the Bill were drafted on restricted lines it is doubtful whether (1) a sufficient number of Liberals would vote in its favor to secure it a second reading; (2) an amendment considerably extending its scope would be in order in view of the Speaker's recent ruling.

THE circumstances are different from what they were on the amendments to the Franchise Bill, and opinion cannot be reckoned on in quite the same way. Tory suffragists are less inclined to enfranchise a large number of women now that the male franchise is not to be extended. Liberal opinion has still further hardened against a Bill on conciliation lines. The Tories will not assist to pass the Bill in subsequent Sessions under the provisions of the Parliament Act. This is, perhaps, the worst feature in prospect. But numbers have wisely decided to concentrate on the passage of a Bill through the Commons next Session without forcing debate on to future stages. One gain to the suffragists is clear. The vote on this Bill will be far more free and unfettered than any vote could have been on amendments to the Franchise Bill.

WE must expect that the new procedure under the Parliament Act for passing Bills through the House of Commons a second time will be a burning topic next session. How precisely will the Act operate? No one seems to know. As there is no possibility of amendment, the process of passing through Committee could not fairly be regarded as a reconsideration of the Bill. It is a pure formality, and debate must accordingly be

very much restricted. It is doubtful, therefore, whether there can be a Committee and Report stage if no amendment can be made or accepted. Thus a situation may arise which will give the Opposition a formidable opening for attack. The Government's general course is clear enough, but in the details care must be taken to establish a precedent which will bear the strain of time.

No one, I think, who likes journalism for its own sake can regret that sharp medicine is being this week administered by the Marconi Committee to some of its conductors. One can respect even a perverted public spirit like Mr. Belloc's; for over-watchfulness in a State where the money interest is strong is not a characteristic excess of our editors. But I do not find this quality in most of the comments on the Marconi case, but rather partisanship run mad and snapping at every Liberal person that crosses its path. The founder of this venomous style is, I am afraid, Mr. Maxse, of the "National Review," and he has given it to some usually more prudent watch-dogs of Conservatism.

MR. MAXSE is quite a likeable man, with much of his father's rather *cross* idealism about him, and a good deal of sincerity and some charm and refinement of his own. Why his pen should scatter not ink so much as spume, which covers persons, characters, careers with an unmeaning froth of furious declamation, must always be a puzzle to those who know him. The other day I read in the "National Review" a ludicrous misdescription of Mr. George's personal habits and expenditure, bad-tempered, silly, and truthless. I suppose when one gets tuned to such a key it is hard to settle down to a lower one. But, after all, the public tone of the "National Review" is the private tone of "society." It astonishes foreigners of distinction—among them the late German Ambassador, who knew the England of twenty or thirty years ago very well—to hear even women at dinner tables talking of Ministers—need I say of one Minister in particular?—as if they would love to strangle them with their fingers. And that is quite a refined reflection of the tea-table splutter of the golf-house and the club-room. It is also the spirit of the "National Review." And this week it has had a very nasty jar. Nine-tenths of it is panic about property.

ON Disestablishment, as on Home Rule, the Lords' debates point to one conclusion. We are to have a Bill, but not *this* Bill—in other words, we are eventually to have a committee stage (probably in the ensuing Session) in which the Irish Bill will be converted into a Provincial Councils scheme, and the Welsh Bill purged entirely of the taint of disendowment. I doubt whether the peers will be well advised in wasting their time, particularly on the Home Rule issue, on an impossible reconstruction of the Government's proposals. Sooner or later they are expected to bring their demands down to some workable level, or at any rate to a point at which negotiation might become possible, and if business is meant this should be done sooner rather than later, certainly not later than the second time of asking. Among my Irish friends I

find opinion setting steadily against the idea, not, indeed, of an eleventh-hour, but of a twelfth-hour compromise. It is obvious that if compelled to wait till the third Session for a practical offer, Nationalist Ireland would then be strongly tempted to exact her full price under the Parliament Act.

ALTHOUGH the Lords are not neglecting their remaining powers—witness the suspension of the Irish and Welsh Bills, and almost certainly of the Scottish Temperance Bill—they are feeling the loss of their absolute veto. Lord Halsbury spoke the truth the other day when, in taunting those who had refused to become Die-hards on their present humiliation, he described their debates as a mockery and a farce. Probably this phase of self-abasement and mutual reproach will pass. Meanwhile, one sees the transition mood typified in Lord Lansdowne's demeanor. Gone is the old arrogance, gone the self-assured and jaunty finality of tone with which sentence used to be passed on Liberal measures, and gone, above all, is that large air of autocratic tolerance formerly extended to the appeals of Ministers on behalf of their doomed Bills. In their place we have a new surliness of temper and overstrained sensitiveness to criticism, a personal touchiness, and more than a hint of new stylism such as we have been accustomed to associate rather with Mr. Bonar Law than with his colleague in the troubled Unionist leadership.

TORY agents must be getting very bad reports from rural districts of the effect of their leader's withdrawal from agricultural protection. Mr. Chaplin heads the discontent, but it is by no means a one-man movement. The farmers threaten abstention, and good judges doubt whether, if this mood can be overcome, they can be induced to work for Tory candidates. So great is the demoralisation in some county constituencies that a third—or is it a fourth?—right-about-face is quite possible.

THE very admirable management of the British Museum—how much superior to that of the Bibliothèque Nationale!—is contriving another of its many benefits for the world of students. When the additions to the building are complete, they will be found to include a new and fine Journal Room. Here will be kept all the great periodical literature of the world, as it appears week by week, or month by month. The special point of the new organisation will be that each number will be available as near as possible to the day of issue, not merely, as heretofore, well after that date. So that in future musicians, doctors, lawyers, all kinds of students, can resort to the Museum instead of to their special societies and reading rooms for the last periodical enrichment of their store of knowledge.

I FOLLOWED Ibsen's "Pretenders" at the Haymarket on Wednesday night with deep curiosity as to how this beautiful literary play would be played, and how it would be received. On both counts I was satisfied. At first, one misses the perfect technique of the later poetic-realistic plays, in which the genius of Ibsen is in full

flower, and every phrase is refined down to the last nicety of dramatic meaning. There are some over-sentimental passages, and one or two *longueurs* (in spite of the cutting) which I attributed to the deliberate pace at which the play was taken. But how noble the feeling, how stately the development, how brilliantly realised the best characters! It is astonishing that Irving never played Bishop Nicholas. I know he was greatly attracted, but why he never attempted a part that was made for him, and would have given him his greatest death-bed scene, with all the spiritual *eeriness* that he coveted, I cannot understand. His son played beautifully, and his looks were Earl Sküle to the life. And Mr. Haviland's Bishop Nicholas seemed to be just right—in appearance a magnificent mask of evil, and not overdone. Nothing in modern drama approaches the guerdon that the playing of this character offers to an actor with a gift for the picturesque. I hope London will have the wit to go and see it.

JUNIOR Ministers and others who have lately had occasion to plead a misreport in explanation of platform indiscretions may be interested in a piece of advice given the other day by a veteran skilled in the affairs alike of the platform and of Parliament. To this senior came a youthful colleague, full of wrath at the alleged inaccuracies in a report of his speech, and swearing that he must take action. "For Heaven's sake do nothing," was the Sage's earnest advice. "They may take to reporting you accurately."

SNORING is out of order. So I gather from a dialogue which took place in the small hours of the morning early in the week.

Sir A. Markham: On a point of order, Sir. Hon. Members are snoring here and we cannot hear what the hon. member is saying.

The Deputy Chairman: I cannot see any members asleep.

Sir A. Markham: There they are.

The Deputy Chairman: Any noises associated with somnolence on the part of any members of the House are certainly not orderly.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

"THE DEVIL IS DEAD!"

WHEN the events of our time have shrunk a century hence to their due proportion in a book of annals, it will be, we suspect, the exploit of an English laboratory which will illustrate this year. In our contemporary ears the Bulgarian guns make a deafening thunder, and every day we hear the footsteps of nations that advance and retreat. A few lines of small print will record the uncouth names of these crowning victories, and summarise in round thousands the deaths of nameless soldiers. The great event, if we mistake not, will be the achievement which Sir William Ramsay announced the other day to the Chemical Society. The bare fact is sufficiently startling; its predestined influence on the thinking of the world promises revolution. By passing an electrical discharge through a vacuum tube Sir

William Ramsay, Professor Collie, and Mr. Patterson have succeeded in making helium and neon. This piece of prose may be translated in several ways for the imagination, and each of these ways is startling. A generation ago the chemical elements were still secure in their pride of place as the irreducible facts of the material world. The chemist who dreamed of transmuting one into the other was for his contemporaries a charlatan who would degrade his science to the superstitions of the dark ages. We hear the news to-day that one element has given birth to another without a shock of surprise. It is no longer the miracle which seems to upset the course of Nature. It is rather the miracle which comes somewhat tardily from the slow processes of the laboratory to confirm the swifter intuitions of scientific speculation. Mathematics first discovered the planet Neptune, and located it in the heavens by following, as it were, the trail of a long track of algebraical deduction. It was a comforting but not a startling event when the telescope confirmed what calculation had revealed. So it was in chemistry also. Mendelejeff dared to dream that the elements might not be absolutely stark and unrelated creations. He saw them forming an evolutionary series, and ranged their atomic weights in a row as a biologist will place his genera and species. Here and there he guessed at a gap, and predicted a "missing link." The elusive element has since been found in the laboratory to complete the chain, much as the skeleton of an ape-man may be unearthed in Borneo. We knew that a rich and active element might "degenerate" into a simpler and more inert element. It was Sir William Ramsay himself who produced helium from radium. Thought insisted that if this were so, then equally, under the appropriate conditions, the poorer elements might be built up into the richer. But what were the appropriate conditions? Such transmutations might be possible only in the laboratory of Chaos. It has turned out that the conditions are relatively simple, mundane, and easy to produce. The thing has been done with no very elaborate apparatus in London.

All this is interesting. But the real speculative excitement of this experiment lies not so much in the creation of an element and the "birth of an atom" as in the fact that energy has apparently been transformed into matter. An accurate quantitative interpretation of what happened when the electric discharge entered the vacuum bulb forbids us to say merely that hydrogen was built up into helium and neon. The energy of the electricity was somehow concentrated into this material form, or at least contributed to it. Once more we have the miracle which confirms and not the miracle which contradicts. For modern theory the elementary atom is a complex in which units of electricity, negative and positive, closely interlocked, revolve at relatively vast distances within a Lilliputian space, attracting and repelling one another, like planets in a solar system. We are asked to imagine that about 700 of these electrons compose the poor inert atom of hydrogen, and 160,000 a rich atom of radium. The more radical thinkers had years ago ceased to imagine any material nucleus for all the interactions of the electrons, for this infinitesimal astronomy which is the internal life of the atom. Electricity was the intelligible, knowable, measurable thing in terms of which all the "properties" of matter could be read. Matter itself, the inert "solid" substance, was the real *x*, the unintelligible, and, as we now know, the unnecessary assumption. Sir William Ramsay's experiment is the event which gives popular life to this theory. Metaphysicians had long ago analysed the solidity out of the category of substance. Physicists had ceased to use irreducible matter even as a working hypothesis. They had envisaged the world, after a first reduction to atoms, as a complex in which the single and simple thing is the electrical unit, capable of endless combinations, whose internal politics give us the chemical elements, each with its familiar properties. And now it seems as though electricity in a form, which to our unsophisticated thinking is what we call energy, could be transmuted by a cunning but simple experiment into a thing which we readily recognise as "matter." The

experiment forces the scientist who had already accepted the reduction of the atoms to electrons into no new position. But to the layman it is a revolutionary fact. It is the sort of fact which would give a modern Dr. Johnson pause, if he were tempted to refute the physicists by tapping the hard wood of the table.

Experimental verification commonly lags after theory, as retribution with its lame foot halts after crime. A new and startling fact like this, to the plain man so shattering and exciting, will hardly even amuse the metaphysicians, for the simple reason that the metaphysicians had long ago assumed the theory of "transformism," and recognised the unity of the material universe by an act of faith. But in our daily thinking these new revelations of physics, which is to-day what biology was to our fathers, the pioneer and the torchbearer among the sciences, cannot fail to bring a revolution. Metaphysicians have never allowed themselves to be much intimidated by matter; that is their courage. Poets have seen it melt away in the light of setting suns, as Wordsworth saw it melt at Tintern Abbey. But deep in all our minds, strident in our daily speech, troubled and gloomy in our religious speculations, the antithesis in which matter was set, now against form and now against spirit, has been fundamental. It was always the intractable thing, now subject to the plastic workings of creative energy and thought, and now rebellious. It was always one irreducible element in every system of dualism, and it authorised, while it stood apart as the foreign stuff of the world, the pessimism of the mystic and the saint. One is tempted to-day to gather the sad crowd of Manicheans and ascetics together in front of Sir William Ramsay's laboratory, and proclaim to them, in the words of the immortal Denis, that "the devil is dead." Matter has ceased to be a final fact even for physics, and in its cruder forms materialism has become a curiosity in the history of the thought. It is still, to be sure, a very wonderful and stimulating curiosity. No poet, since metre was invented, has so marvellously anticipated the vision of modern science as Lucretius with his rain of atoms. It would, after all, only have added a fresh glory to his system, if he had sung the praises of "increase-giving Venus, darling of men and gods," while he told of the attractions and repulsions of the electrons within the atoms. We have lost nothing of the stimulus even of a crude and wilful effort to envisage the unity of things. Rather we have found in the physical realm an ultimate and irreducible unit, which seems by a natural transition to prepare us for the facts of life and will and consciousness. Matter to unsophisticated thought was the thing repugnant to will, which might be subdued by it, but might as probably prove recalcitrant and triumphant. In such simple and metaphorical terms we most of us do our thinking, and one may question whether the most technical philosophy comes nearer to precision. Physics invites us to-day to dismiss matter in this ultimate sense as an obsolete hypothesis. It has not yet said that in the beginning was the word; but equally it denies that in the beginning was the fact. It starts from a notion of energy, creative by its infinite capacity for entering into novel and various combinations. It has given new plausibility to the metaphor of the forward impulse of life. It has grounded and articulated for us the conception of a unity in things. We are a little nearer than we were to Bergson's eloquent vision. "The animal takes its starting point from the plant, man rides on his animal nature, and the whole of humanity, in space and time, is an immense army which gallops beside each one of us, before us and behind, in an impetuous charge which can overthrow every resistance and cross many an obstacle—it may be even Death."

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

WE are continually being reminded that this is an age of crumbling creeds, and of disillusioned worshippers wandering about in search of a new spiritual habitation more weather-tight and better fitted with all the modern

conveniences. It might appear as if the faith so eloquently expounded by Mr. Frederic Harrison in his new volume, "The Evolution of Positive Religion" (Heinemann), were particularly well adapted to meet this need. For it has been expressly designed to fulfil the supposed requirements of the educated modern man and woman by a reconciliation of the scientific view of man and the universe with the ceremonies and the moral discipline of the older religions. Rejecting the dross of superstition, the miracles, special inspiration, personal divinities, and irrational dogmas belonging to the imaginativeness of a pre-scientific age, Positivism claims to select, to retain, and to improve for the modern service of man the modes of discipline and worship, and the other spiritual aids which the various great religious systems had evolved. A wide, impartial survey of the whole range of known history enables Positivism to pluck even from the early crude forms of fetishism some fitful gleams of spiritual meaning; to incorporate the richness, variety, and tolerance of polytheism, and the sterner authoritarianism of monotheism in its several main branches. From Christianity it claims to take all that is really ennobling, the deepened sense of moral personality, the purity of domestic life, the transcendence of the barriers of nation, race, sex; the regard for the poor and weak, and the cultivation of the softer virtues disparaged by the best cults of paganism; everything except the distinctive dogmas and the high significance accorded to the person and the work of the first founder. The structure of Roman Catholicism, indeed, it absorbs almost in its entirety—ceremonial, discipline, authority, the whole institution, with the trifling exception of its creed! The Anglican establishment, it is true, furnishes comparatively little to the new religion, except its qualities of tolerance and elasticity. For it has weakened its capacity of spiritual service by its class attachments.

"We seldom find the Church, or any eminent body of Churchmen, take the lead in seeking to prevent a war, to abolish cruel sports, to put an end to social wars, to assuage the violence of strikes and lock-outs, to check the greed of capital and the anarchy of its victims. Quakers, Wesleyans, Baptists, Unitarians, and Positivists may try their best to do these things. The Church, as a body, officially, and apart from a few isolated persons, sticks to its masters—the governing majority—and to its 'patrons'—the rich owners of its livings. There is not, and there never has been in Christendom, a communion which was socially, morally, and politically, so closely identified with the governing classes of the State."

As for orthodox dissent, though it has its proper virtues, they are offset by conspicuous defects, a narrow culture, a democratic organisation, and a perilous reliance upon the authority of a miscellaneous collection of writings called "the Bible," which is everywhere being undermined by criticism.

"That is the gulf to which, as to a Niagara, the full stream of Orthodox Dissent is steadily and smoothly hurrying. When the Bible is knocked from under its feet as the sole revelation of God, it is hanging in the air over the abyss—for it has neither tradition, antiquity, Church, organisation, ritual, ceremonial, art, or poetry to fall back on."

Neo-Christianity, with its rationalising tendency, its withdrawal of all explicit doctrines of other-worldliness and the miraculous, its stress upon the humanity of Jesus, and the social applications of His gospel, Positivism is ready to accept and to incorporate, with a gentle note of protest against the unique value of the central figure, and a preference for the more constructive Paul. Theism is treated with less sympathy than the more organised creeds, chiefly because, being unorganised, it has nothing to recommend it but a transcendental attitude directed towards a supernatural personality which brings to a focus all the difficulties and contradictions of theology.

This survey of the field of religious experiments leads to the triumphant emergence of Humanity as the supreme object of reverence and worship. For it alone is found to give complete satisfaction to the reason and the emotions. "The Philosophy of Humanity in a basis of encyclopedic science, crowned by the science of society and the science of human nature, explains,

inspires, and harmonises all these gospels. The religion of Humanity accepts, reverences, and adds new glory to all these redeemers, saviors, and mediators." The Positivist faith alone, it is contended, escapes the metaphysical perplexities of every religion relying upon a super-human deity and a personal immortality.

"We say frankly, 'Humanity' finds itself in a world for the defects of which it is not answerable, which it can largely come to know, and partly to improve, rising to higher things generation after generation, helping each one of us to rise to better things, till we each become, in the rest of death, part of that very Providence which nourishes the infant, strengthens and informs the man, and lays our weary bones to rest in tender memory of whatever good we may have left to our fellow-beings, who will follow us on earth."

Here is a religion which, accepting all that is good in the past, gently reforms it to the service of the future, sets aside without the bitterness of controversy the barren problems of theology, reconciles science with religion, the welfare of the individual with that of the race, progress with order. A few of the foremost thinkers of the last half-century have embraced this religion, some of the ablest writers have expounded it. But the fact remains that it has failed to gather into its fold more than a little handful of the educated men and women who, in every civilised country, have broken away from the creeds of orthodoxy. What are the reasons for this failure of the appeal of the Religion of Humanity? One reason, we believe, is that the dogmatic spirit which the very name of "Positive" implies, and the elaboration of the scientific system which it inhabits, are repellent to those who, having broken loose from one cage, are shy of entering any other. This is not altogether a foolish timidity. The spick-and-span completeness of the brand-new spiritual edifice, with its particular arrangements to satisfy every intellectual and moral need of man, arouses a suspicion of excessive artifice. The ingenious adoption of the forms and ceremonies and the organisation of the Roman Church awakes some instinctive suspicions in those who cannot bring themselves to accept the sharp severance between creed and ritual which Positivism asserts when it seizes the latter for its own stage property. Coalescing with this doubt is the sense of an excessive intellectualism, which is not exorcised by the ceremonial efforts to work up a passion for Humanity. There is a feeling that the science has eaten up the religion, and the sentiment of reverence on which it thrives. This is not indeed the necessary result of science, which, instead of killing wonder, may only expand its area. But the persistent application of scientific method is not easily consistent with that sort of reverence which belongs to religion. Darwin's confession that his intellectual life inhibited his taste for poetry is a candid recognition of this real opposition between the life of science and that of the emotions.

But hardly less patent is the failure of Positivism to furnish a convincing object of reverence. Neither the modern Rationalist nor the modern Emotionalist is prepared to worship man, collective or individual. The history of man, in his slow, irregular, upward struggle from the brute, is intensely interesting, and appeals powerfully to our sympathy, but it fails to evoke a feeling of religious reverence, partly, perhaps, because of the very closeness of this sympathy. Man does not worship man, as dog does not eat dog. Nor is this emotional difficulty overcome, except for a few, by ritualising the march of man in epochs, paths of progress, names of pioneers. Such a method either tends towards a sort of hero-worship, which falsifies history, and which is indeed explicitly repudiated by Positivist theory, or else it has to rely upon an immense and ever shifting conglomerate concept of Humanity exceedingly difficult to respect, much less to reverence. That some genuine emotion may and must gather round the idea of human progress, as conceived by any intelligent and educated man, is true enough, but that it can furnish an adequate religion is found by actual experience to be an unwarranted assumption. Persons of philosophic training will be prone to find another defect in the Positive philosophy and its religion, viz., its anthropocentrism and its relative failure to recognise a Universe. Although

Mr. Harrison devotes some interesting pages to attempting to disprove the imputation of anthropocentrism which is suggested by the very title of his creed, he does not succeed in showing that a disinterested attention is given to the world and the universe. They always remain distinctively man's environment, and this is in itself a denial of anything that can be called a genuine Weltanschauung. As the modern philosopher wants a Universe, and will not be fobbed off with a bunch of dualisms, so the religious-minded man, who has shed the old dogmatic creeds, still craves a setting of that universe in terms of personality as a condition of the survival or revival of the religious sentiment. If science fails to justify this attribution, he tends to eke out its deficiency by poetry or by mystical speculation.

We do not affect to discuss the validity of these reasons and feelings. We merely point out that they have been effective barriers to the acceptance of Positivism as a religion. The new wine in old bottles does not in fact hit the taste of most liberated minds in search of a religion. Modern thought will not have these bottles. The iconoclasm which Positivism deprecates, is not merely a passing revolutionary phase, but a half-emotional, half-rational repudiation of the sorts of ceremonialism, authoritarianism, dogmatic interpretation of history, and meticulous discipline, which Positivism appears to wish to restore.

THE POET'S TRADE.

EVERY Saturday morning, much surer than the sun, a writer, who chooses to be known as "The Author of 'Collections and Recollections,'" sheds upon Manchester a mild and magnificent light. It rises in a certain page of the "Manchester Guardian," and, because it is there, one notices that the Saturday issue needs no illuminating book-reviews, and no varied "middle," such as adorns the last page on every other day of the week. The "middle's" place is taken by mere advertisements—distressing substitutes to all but the proprietors. But, indeed, this lucent and recurrent writer never fails to supply sufficient radiance for anyone's single day; so warm with central knowledge he is, so kindling with lambent and beneficent flame. Not scorching or blasting with indignation, as is the way of other stars, sick almost to doomsday, but urbane and comfortable even in his heat.

In fact, he is so urbane that the perpetual wonder is to find him hot at all. His observation, wit, and anecdote run as easily as an armchair conversation, and one would rather expect Liberalism at the Reform Club than passion there. But yet, on certain subjects, one finds it, and there comes a sudden pleasure of surprise at the discovery, as when you touch a polished handle and it gives you an electric shock. At the mention of Turks and Hellenes, or of religious dubitations and ecclesiastical solutions, what startling vibrations are set in motion! What zeal is felt stirring in the bosom of urbanity! What personal conviction, and assurance almost militant! In ourselves he best arouses this stimulating pleasure of surprise when he writes with zest upon matters of belief, or even of ritual, carrying forward into a cooler age the traditions of bygone conflicts, which to him almost appear to be warring still. He knew the heroic combatants of those times, and to him they are living influences now. Unlike a Highland girl, as we may suppose, in other respects, he sings of battles long ago; but of them he sings with the first-hand and final knowledge of intimate association, and of personal danger in the fighting whereof he was himself a part. So he speaks as one having authority, and not as the journalists.

For such a writer, whose early manhood's interests were evidently mid-Victorian, and whose memory is surcharged with the social and religious problems of those years, the name of Matthew Arnold will necessarily hold the high place that is its due. To the honor of that name he devoted last Saturday's article, writing of it

with the admiration, not, indeed, of perfect acceptance and discipleship, but of understanding and respect, such as a cultivated Nonconformist might feel for Newman. More, indeed; for, in spite of all his ecclesiastic interest, the lines that separated him from Matthew Arnold can never have been rigid or impassable. So his estimate, though not excessive in praise, is in the main wise, especially when he considers Arnold as interpreting "certain tendencies of thought which swayed men's mind in the reaction from the Anglican revival," and goes on to show how Arnold stands beside Wordsworth in restoring to a rather melancholic age the widespread joy of common nature. But it is not upon his just appreciation of Matthew Arnold that we now wish to dwell.

Before he comes to the appreciation, he says, apologetically, that Arnold never quite fulfilled himself in poetry because "he only wrote in the scanty leisure-hours of a laborious profession." He "gave up to school-inspecting what was meant for the delectation of mankind"; otherwise, "he would have written more, he would have commanded a wider audience, and would have obtained that firm touch and assured mastery of his art without which no man can hope to dominate his readers." After quoting Arnold's own words about the "irksomeness" of his duties, he maintains that, in place of pursuing those duties, he "ought to have been meditating, in undistracted peace, 'On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,'" and he continues:—

"While Arnold was thus employed," (i.e., in examining little girls and listening to Board-School lessons) "Browning was stretched on the turf among the rose-trees in his father's garden, or tracking Shelley's footsteps in the Euganean Hills, or floating in Venetian sunshine. Tennyson was declaiming his earliest and most perfect lyrics as he strode over the Lincolnshire wolds, or studying Nature with a lover-like assiduity in the recesses of the Trossachs and the Tintern woods."

Does it not sound like irony? The turf and rose-trees, Shelley's footsteps and the Euganean Hills, Venetian sunshine, Lincolnshire wolds, the Trossachs, and Tintern woods—why, if one had wished to write in irony of the picturesque tourist, or of the average cultured fool's existence that never for a single moment, from cradle to grave, could come into touch with one single reality of life, with what finer scorn could one have written? And yet we fear the passage is not ironic. We fear it is quite seriously meant. We fear that this pretty kind of life among rose-trees, gondolas, Shelley's footsteps, woods, wolds, and all the rest of the picturesque baggage is the kind of life that this admirable writer considers best suited for the production of the best poetry. If so, we utterly and without reserve deny it. We believe that no conception of the poetic life could be more false, more degrading, or more pernicious. We maintain that only in so far as poets have resolutely eschewed that kind of life has their poetry been strong or rung true, and so far as they have yielded to the temptation of following it, their poetry has withered and shrunk.

But let us reason together, for the Author of "Collections and Recollections" is reasonable and urbane. To take the two poets he mentions as blest with so superior a life to Arnold's, no one can surpass the present writer in admiration for Tennyson and Browning. It is true, they are not much thought of in these present years, and, in some circles, to admit an admiration for either, especially for Tennyson, is to admit yourself an old-age pensioner of the Muses. But one cannot so easily forswear a boyhood's loyalty, nor, with "The Lotus Eaters" or "St. Praxed's Bishop" singing or humming in one's head, affect to despise so precious a benefaction because the fashion of to-day couples it with crinolines. And, side by side with those two great names, let us take a greater still—the name of Wordsworth, who might be said to have fulfilled that picturesque and artistic kind of existence even more entirely than they, and to have given himself to the unrestricted pursuit of poetry even more completely. In his case, again, no one could surpass the present writer in devotion. It is absurd to place great poets in order of

excellence. In his own quality of excellence every poet must be first or nowhere. But still, if the painful choice had to be made, one would do without almost any other English poet of last century rather than Wordsworth. And yet he seems an example of the ideal poetic life which we call a false ideal; almost a perfect example, for his little bit of official work came to him late and was not exacting.

Here, then, we have three great names, all, apparently, enjoying the kind of life which the Author of "Collections and Recollections" thinks best suited for a poet, and all accomplishing achievements the greatness of which we would ourselves maintain even more admiringly than most modern critics. It seems as though the Author was winning his case—winning "hands down." Does it not look as though Matthew Arnold might have produced more and better poetry if he had not been obliged to work for his living, and instead of the irksomeness of school-inspecting had revelled in the poetic freedom of turf, rose-trees, Euganean hills, Venetian sunshine, wolds, Trossachs, and Tintern? Certainly it does seem so. His two volumes of verse, even when printed large, are of no great size, and the volumes of each of the others, printed on that scale, would fill a longish shelf. Any judge would decide that, counting by weight and quantity, the Author wins, and quantity counts high. And yet—and yet, we consider those quantities again; we see among them "Parleyings with Certain People," and "Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau." Shall we say we see "The Ring and the Book"? We see "The Idylls of the King," and "The Promise of May." We see "The Excursion" and the "Ecclesiastical Sonnets." And then we begin to doubt and wonder. The warning lines come into our head:—

"And Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

Those "Parleyings," those "Idylls of the King," those "Ecclesiastical Sonnets"—are they not the very mischief that Satan finds?

May we not suppose that if these three poets had been driven, like Matthew Arnold, to the irksome business of school-inspecting, they would have escaped a deal of mischief? Wordsworth himself was conscious of his danger. With all his power he pursued "severe delight," laying the strictest laws upon himself, and yet he cried:—

"Me this unchartered freedom tries;
I feel the weight of chance-desires."

It is not only that a stress of life like Arnold's would have saved them from carrying upon their fame a burden of impediments which obstruct and even arrest its forward course; nor only that we who love them cannot bestow on them that highest reward due to the things a man has *not* written. But, worse, than this, in much of their better work they have missed the keenness, the concentration, the clean-cutting edge that the best poets keep. That word *acies*—the edge of a sword, the edge of an army advancing in line, the edge of a clear-glancing eye—the Romans used also for the edge of genius, and it needs something more than the life of a picturesque tourist to keep it bright, no matter how assiduously he cherishes his poetic powers, or in what undistracted peace he meditates on Man, on Nature, and on Human Life. Indeed, our point is that, unless the poet lives, he may meditate for ever on Human Life and get no forwarder. He may still have nothing to say that would compare with what was said by Æschylus, who fought against the Persians, or Sophocles, who commanded a fleet, or the rebels, exiles, and soldiers of freedom like Euripides, Dante, Milton, and Byron. The mention of Milton, who gave as much of his life to practical and irksome toil as to poetry, and yet more surely than any other Englishman obtained "that firm touch and assured mastery of his art" which the Author of "Collections and Recollections" rightly demands—the mention of that name inevitably recalls his well-worn saying about the heroic life that must be lived by one who would write heroic poems. All great poetry is, in a sense, heroic, but we find no particular heroism in stretching on the turf

among rose-trees, tracking Shelley's footsteps, floating in Venetian sunshine, striding over wolds, or studying Nature in the recesses of the Trossachs and the Tintern woods. We should look for it rather in the school-inspector's irksome and slighted trade, and thence, we think, Matthew Arnold may have derived a quality which gives a reserved concentration and a stern edge—the *acies* of hard reality—to his brief but sufficient work.

THE HALF-WAY HOUSE.

It is the half-way house out of winter into spring that is marked by St. Valentine's Day. It is the milestone on the ridge that gives us a first view of the promised land, the point where the road runs down instead of up, the acme of a southern slope whose flowers bloom while those we have passed are still asleep. In other words, there is a change at this precise time of year that seems to be more than a change of degree, especially the degree of one day's solar progress. It does not matter if the ground is hard with frost, as it often is in mid-February. It soon becomes a thing of the shade only. White banks are faced by those that steam and radiate with a thrill like that of life; water beetles get the message through the ice, the twigs tell the roots undeterred by the pigmy bracelet of frost round an inch of trunk.

You would think that this was the only perfect weather. It is neither warm nor cold, but the exact sympathetic medium of the bath that a very careful mother prepares for her babe. It wraps you and it pervades you, not as the fire-glow does, gradually and after a little time, but all in a moment. You cannot believe that a day should make so much change, but there are a thousand witnesses to bear you out. Hear that starling on the holly bush. You cannot say that he is singing or even whistling. He is making a crowd of noises so hustling to be out that they stick in his throat. He is shot through with the new sunshine, and must bubble or explode. See the wood-pigeon winging across the country, then, instead of going into his beech-tree in the usual rational wood-pigeon way, he soars high over his haven, and stoops at it with raised wings like a hawk. You cannot ask him why he does so, but you know as surely as if he told you that he is feeling the same ecstasy as you. The breath of the South has got into him, and if it is a delusion, then all the creatures share it.

It is not sunshine that makes the difference. There need be no sun, and yet the magic will be in the air on a fine day near the fourteenth of February. A perfectly still day does not bring it. There must be motion from the south, just a pulsation of alternating pressure to make the neutral environment felt. Neither barometer nor thermometer will foretell it in their detached and scientific college within doors. There is a vrillometer just outside that never fails; but then the very moment you open the door you know all about it for yourself. Still, the drain plant, like the starling and the wood-pigeon, is a witness appealing to a coarser and therefore more worthy sense than that which "feels" the first spring morning. When you imagine a feast it is Barmecide, but when you smell it, it is as good as eaten. And our noses that can no longer pick up the scent of a game animal or of a friend whose way we want to find still have a more wonderful intimacy with the memory and the seat of faith than any other sense.

The drain plant's other name is unknown. It seems to belong to the woodruff tribe, and in summer crowns each whorled stem with a mass of mauve flowers. Who would expect so sweet-looking a thing to smell like a drain. Someone who stayed here used to wake in the summer night and smell it, and think of typhoid, widowhood, and all sorts of calamities. He was certain for days that the drains were wrong, but at last discovered that the smell that had frightened him so much was the scent of this pretty little flower. When it became ours, nothing was more fixed and determined than that it should be rooted up and demolished. Some attempt on

its life was actually made, but it came up again smiling—and stinking. It is smelt only on fine days, but always on fine days, however wrapped about with cold ones, and however poorly declared by every other sign. It is an evergreen, and gives its smell whether it has flowers or not. Pluck a leaf and crush it, and you can get no trace of its scent on a day that is not fine. Almost at sunrise it prepares its bulletin, and it rushes at you with the good news the moment you open the door. A fine day that does not smell a little like a drain is no longer for us a complete fine day, and there is no plant in the garden, from the snowdrop to the rose and from the rose to the chrysanthemum, that is so loved as the drain plant.

Yes, that little member of the Vegetable Order, an Order that has, of course, no imagination or fancies to betray it, knows (in its way) more about green-winged Spring than the wise thrush. No doubt the thrush gets his news from some resinous rumor in the larch-top where he sings, but often he fails to sing when the drain plant is certain that it is a fine day. It is no credit to him or the larch that he is singing to-day. He at any rate would know it from the hepaticas, which are solid mounds of lilac blossom, or from the spring heather or the rosy mezereum calling the bees by every allurements they have. There they are coming into their ark, bearing three or four distinctly different kinds of pollen from the world which almost yesterday was barren. We can only guess at them. That pale yellow is from colt's-foot, that rich and surprising orange from a rare dandelion in Sunny Lane, possibly the white from snowdrop, though more likely from hepatica. Many another flower that we have not seen is discoverable to the bee ignorant of the law of trespass and a specialist in flowers.

That worriting hive, of course, strikes a note that is all out of accord with the spirit of the day. The very object of this smile from the south is to turn the whole world into holiday, and it turns the bees' long rest into hard toil. They are old people well worthy of a pension, for the bees of 1913 have not yet been hatched. They stagger perceptibly under their loads, light as they are. Their memory wanders, and they alight on the hedge instead of the hive, and wonder who they are and where they live. The new nectar and the ecstatic scent of pollen may well make them drunk; it ought to make them truants, but they slave on like railway servants, whose work is even increased by the leisure of the rest of the world. We knew a man who read law, and he told us that he could work better on a fine day than on a wet one. Not so we. Let us off to the woods where no bees are, and where the gaudy chaffinches do nothing but wonder what idle follies they can invent next to pleasure the intoxication of the south wind.

The chaffinch is heir to a strange tradition, for which we have never seen much evidence. He is of all birds the bachelor, wintering in flocks of men only, afar from even the remote possibility of marriage. The corollary, of course, is that there are hen flocks also. One such sojourned in the centre of London one winter, so that it could be observed every day. And just at this time of year about every other one of these lady bachelor finches turned into males! It was really a mixed party of young birds. Segregation such as is alleged to belong to the chaffinch implies consciousness of sex, and we do not believe that the gregarious birds are conscious of sex during the season when sex goes for nothing. All the flocks of little birds are bachelor parties, but more wonderful bachelor parties than we are able to imagine. "Boy and girl bachelors" would not suit the case, because they do not know in winter time what "boy and girl" signifies. Some have never known, others have forgotten. Love is an epidemic that comes from the south in the spring. Now it comes again, and every flocking bird looks on its next file with new and amazed eyes. Every other private in the army is a Rosalind, who had been disguised, and every Rosalind knows it for the first time.

Some birds seem to lose not only sexual but specific consciousness. There was a little troop of nondescripts that used to take the same round every day during the

winter. There were great tits, blue tits, cole tits, a tree-creeper, a nuthatch, and a lesser spotted woodpecker. We wonder whether the nuthatch thought he was among his fellows. They all had much the same habits. At any rate, two of them had the same strong disinclination to perch across a twig like a sparrow. You might say that none of them ever committed the enormity. The nuthatch was the most silent member of the party. Now he has left it: so has everyone else. But the nuthatch sits upon a branch, crossways, like a sparrow, and sings. He sings something like a tit, but it is his very own song for all that. It will surely bring the lady nuthatch along, and she will know it for her own song, though she too has been consorting with tits and tree-creepers all the winter. And the song will stop when its purpose has been accomplished. Never again till next spring will the nuthatch perch across the twig. Only the mid-February wind from the south-west can make him do that.

Short Studies.

THE FIRE AT MILLDEEP MANOR.

MRS. LATIMER's old house, Milldeep Manor, was burnt down on Christmas Eve. A maid-servant went to the hot-closet to fetch her young mistress's clothes, and set a tall candlestick on one of the racks. The flame caught the rack above it, dry as tinder, and the whole building in ten minutes was in a blaze. The fire, partly through the scarcity of water, had to burn itself out, and was not extinguished till early on Christmas Day. Milldeep is about an hour by train from the village in which I live. I went over the instant I heard the news, but I was not at the Manor till about ten o'clock on Christmas morning. Saving one wing, it was almost a complete wreck, and charred joists of the upper floors hung by the ends downwards threatening to fall. The roof had entirely gone, and the interior lay open to the sky. In one of the angles was the bedroom in which generations had been born and had died. To that room went as a bride the lady whose noble portrait, painted by Opie when she was seventy-six, hung on the staircase. Three years afterwards, hard upon eighty, in that room, she had yielded up her soul to God. Fifty years before she had given birth there to her only son, Margaret's father. In that yellow room he was laid, hardly to be discerned for blood and wounds when he was brought home, dead, after being thrown from his horse and dragged along a hard road with one foot in the stirrup. To what mysteries of love and death was not that room sacred! It was now laid bare by the "blabbing and remorseless day"; the rain drove through it; it was as public as an open wayside shed.

Margaret Latimer and I were to be married in six weeks. Her only brother, Robert, now in India, would, it was hoped, be present at the wedding and give her away, as her father and her two uncles were dead. But a letter had come two days before Christmas to say that his leave had been put off, but that the wedding was not to be postponed. I agreed with him, but Margaret wished for delay. One reason was the giving-away (her mother was a titled lady's daughter), and people said she was marrying a little beneath her. Margaret cared nothing for rank, but she thought she would like the world to know that her brother, the head of the family, approved the match with the man she so much loved. Then, again, everything was in confusion; the house was to be rebuilt, and a temporary lodging had to be found. I nevertheless persisted. We walked up and down the garden, and gradually some warmth of temper appeared. I believe that jealousy was the root of my discontent. I could not endure her glorification of Robert and her mother. *Jealousy is cruel as the grave: the flashes thereof are flashes of fire, a very flame of the Lord.* I began to be bitter.

"I cannot understand how it is that some families,"

said I, "make so much of one another; you never hear me exalt my own father, mother, brother, sisters, and cousins. Perhaps you will say that I know they are not worth mention."

"O, dearest Tom, you surely do not wish to prevent me from giving pleasure to mother in trifles. She has always been very good and dear to me. I am going away from the Manor for ever. Although a woman may be devoted to her husband, she must feel something when she leaves her mother for strangers. You will give way to me just this once?"

As with a mass of coal at the kindling point there came a flash of flame.

"You care more for Robert and for respectability than you care for me," I cried.

The tongue is a fire . . . and is set on fire by hell.

The Devil was in me. True to the letter! If there is no indwelling Devil, the evidence of consciousness, on which everything rests, goes for nothing.

She withdrew her arm from mine, and at that moment a servant came hastily along the path.

"The carriage is waiting, sir, to take you to the station. The coachman says he shall only just catch the train."

Without a word we parted. We had loved one another with our whole hearts and minds. I believe it was a more intimate, intricately interwoven love than that which binds together any but the most favored of mortals. Passion gave a ruddy tint to all our thoughts, and thought gave a meaning to our embraces. She did not write to me, although morning after morning I looked out for a letter. How could she write after that insult! I ought to have gone to the Manor and cast myself at her feet. As the days went on I became harder—so, at least, I thought.

Six months passed, and I heard that Margaret had been very ill. What was the matter I could not learn precisely. One summer morning I was at Peterborough Station going home. I had to change at Grantham. On the Peterborough platform I saw a lady, dressed in black, who must be Margaret. She was in mourning, as I afterwards learnt, for her brother Robert, who had died of malarial fever just as his leave was about to begin. I noticed that the porter took her luggage, and brought it near me so that it might be handy for the right van. I sauntered carelessly towards it and read the address, *Latimer, Milldeep Manor*. Presently the train slipped past me and stopped. There were very few passengers. It had to wait five minutes. Margaret looked at two or three carriages, and got into an empty compartment. Just as the guard whistled I stepped in. She was looking out of the window opposite the door by which I entered, and remained in that position till we were clear of the station. Then she turned to take a book out of her handbag, but was suddenly arrested. In an instant I had crossed the floor of the carriage, knelt down, and without a word buried my face in her lap. My heart had gradually softened, but, strange as it may seem, I did not know it.

I have never been able to feel myself a sinner in the common acceptance of the word. I have not habitually broken the commandments. But, as my head lay upon Margaret's knees, I thought that for me there could be no forgiveness. My guilt was not so much something I had done as something which I *was*. Repentance seemed a stupid word.

At last I cried "Margaret, Margaret." She smoothed my hair and said "Yes." We did not stir. The train was slowing down as it neared a station. I rose and returned to my corner, but no one intruded. I went on to Retford, and returned by an up train to Grantham.

At the end of another six months we were married. Milldeep Manor was nearly rebuilt, and Mrs. Latimer came to stay with us till it was finished. I was afraid when the marriage day came, but it passed quietly, although there was no Robert in the church. Margaret was given away by her mother's first cousin, whom her mother much loved.

I am thrice blessed. I have much to do during the

greater part of the day with hard, almost brutal, people, and am liable to become hard and brutal even as they. I step over my threshold in the evening, and am in another world where I am sheltered and at peace. Margaret's thoughts go below mine.

MARK RUTHERFORD.

Science.

THE SECRET OF MATTER.

ONE of the latest "fairy-tales of science" is illustrated by the new discovery which Sir William Ramsay described at last week's meeting of the Chemical Society. The whole subject of what is known as "radio-activity" is scarcely seventeen years old. It was only in 1896 that M. Henri Becquerel found that uranium—a scarce metal of which the ore has long been known to Cornish miners as pitchblende, because it looks rather like lumps of solid pitch—emitted rays which seemed to resemble the then newly discovered X rays. The consequent investigations of Madame Curie and other physicists, using methods of singular delicacy for dealing with quantities of material often not much bigger than an ordinary pin-head, led to the discovery of radium and its allied elements. These researches have gone far to realise the dreams of the alchemists, who believed in the transmutation of elements; they have thrown a vivid light on the ultimate secrets of the constitution of matter; and they may point the way to such an industrial revolution, by the introduction of new and amazing sources of power, as will leave the triumphs of the steam and iron age in an inconspicuous background.

The discovery announced by Sir William Ramsay is an extension of one which he made just ten years ago, in conjunction with Mr. Soddy. He then showed, as the result of long and ingenious experiments, that radium—though in every other respect it fulfilled the definition of a chemical "element"—split up under certain conditions into two other "elements." One of these was the rare gas, helium, which had a special interest for the public, because it had been known—through the spectroscope—as a mysterious constituent of the sun's atmosphere, long before it was isolated on our globe. We now know that radium is only one term in a long series of elements—beginning with uranium and probably ending with lead—which have the habit of changing into one another by the successive loss of helium atoms. The discovery now announced—which, like natural selection and the finding of the planet Neptune, was achieved independently by experimenters ignorant of each other's work—carries the transmutation of elements a step further. When the cathode rays from a vacuum tube are passed through pure hydrogen, after a time considerable traces of helium and of another rare gas, neon (one of those inert constituents of the atmosphere discovered as a consequence of Lord Rayleigh's work on argon), are found mixed with the hydrogen. Sir William Ramsay holds that the conditions under which his experiments were made, and their independent verification by Dr. Collie and Mr. Patterson, justify the conclusion, either that these new elements result from the transmutation of hydrogen or of one of the elements of the vacuum tube, or that they are directly generated by the electric discharge itself.

This last hypothesis, wild as it would have seemed to the last generation, is quite in accordance with the theory of matter which is now accepted by leading physicists. This "electrical theory of matter" holds that matter and electricity are ultimately one—or, to put it in other words, that what we call matter is built up of electrical charges alone. A number of various lines of research—both mathematical and experimental—lead us to see, more and more clearly, beyond the eighty-one chemical elements of which all material things are composed, to a new version of the *prima materia* of the earliest thinkers—the one universal and primordial substance on which all created nature is based.

Under certain conditions, the atoms of this primitive and all-pervading substance can be obtained from practically every kind of matter. These atoms are the fundamental atoms of electricity, known as "electrons" or "corpuscles," which are projected from radium as the β rays. The so-called atoms of the chemist are now regarded as minute quasi-astronomical systems, in each of which many electrons are united in a definite organism, stable only in virtue of its rapid motion, just as the solar system is stable because the planets are held in their orbits by the attraction of a central sun. The radio-active elements seem to be less stable than others, and their transmutations are due to periodical convulsions, in which a planetary corpuscle flies out of the system, and the remaining electrons regroup themselves, under dimly perceived laws, into the system of a different atom. The peculiar importance of Sir William Ramsay's discovery is that it may show the same process at work in elements which are not usually classed as radio-active.

The practical outcome of this fascinating line of research may be immensely important. Not, indeed, that there is any likelihood of turning base metals into gold, and thus destroying the world's financial equipoise. The transformation of radium into lead, which does seem to be happening, has no commercial possibilities. But the electrical theory of matter, and the peculiar behavior of radium, have proved the existence of vast stores of intra-atomic energy, incomparably greater than any which we derive from fuel or waterfalls. The energy which thus lies dormant within the atomic convolutions of a single ton of coal, if we could but tap it, would be more than adequate to take the "Mauretania" across the Atlantic and back again; for the energy given out by radium emanation in the course of its transformation is at least 250,000 times as great as that derived from the combustion of an equal weight of carbon. Shall we ever discover a kind of detonator which will set loose these incalculable stores of energy? At present no one can guess how it may be done. But when science is on the trail, unsuspected game often gets up. We need not enlarge on the economic results of a discovery which would enable the world to utilise a source of limitless power many thousand times cheaper and more efficient than coal.

Communications.

THE NARROW MARGIN.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The sad death of Captain Scott and his four companions brings home to us in a terrible manner the fact that modern equipment, aided by scientific invention, has failed to eliminate the dangers inseparable from the work of exploration in the waste lands of the earth. Even to those familiar with the Antarctic, it seems almost incredible that a blizzard should cause the death of men within such a short distance of food and safety. How difficult then for those of us who have never seen such conditions to realise the inevitability of such a sacrifice! These may be divided into those who refer to Antarctic exploration as an "ice picnic," and those who imagine that it is a land of unmitigated horror. Both are far from the truth. Given reasonable luck, sledge journeys, which are not of long duration, and are not undertaken in the cold season of the Antarctic spring, are a joy to a healthy man. The dangers which do exist are slight; at the most it is a tale of physical discomforts. In compensation, the mere fact of living and breathing is an intense pleasure. Above you is a sky of deep, deep blue. The sun shines all day and all night over a land of dazzling whiteness. Blizzards are rare. When they come they are often a pleasant rest, in which you lie in your bags and smoke and yarn. You lie there for one, two, or three days, but you are certain of the result, and there is nothing to worry about. Your discomforts are many but unimportant, minor frost-bites, hunger, thirst, a wet sleeping-bag, and want of sleep—irritating, but not serious until combined with other circumstances.

For those who undertake long sledge journeys, however, a new element of risk is introduced, and those men know that ever at their heels stalks the silent figure of Death. And there is an unwritten law in their code of honor, of which, perhaps, one never speaks, but of which one is fully conscious—that an accident rendering one unfit for travelling is virtually a death sentence. It would be physically impossible for men who have tried their strength to the extent that they can hardly drag a bare sufficiency of food to carry with them a helpless comrade. Such a danger as this, so terrible in its consequences, but perhaps so slight in its causation, cannot be guarded against. Cold and hunger can be provided for. With simple precautions, the danger of crevasses can be reduced to a minimum. But no care can eliminate the unforeseen danger; and now, even as in Franklin's day, the margin between success and failure is a narrow one.

To realise the nature of an Antarctic blizzard, one must shut out from one's mind all idea of snow as we know it in this country. Perhaps those who have experienced a sand-storm will more nearly understand it. Fine sand, like particles of snow, sting the face, blind the eyes, and confuse the senses, until one hardly retains any sense of direction. The work of putting up a tent under such circumstances, usually the work of three men for a matter of minutes, is an almost superhuman task for six. The flimsy tent becomes an unmanageable demon. Buffeted by the wind, stung by the snow, frost-bitten, and possibly snowblind, even the strongest men get dazed. Yet journeys under such circumstances have been made, but by men who were in a reasonable state of health.

All those who knew Captain Scott, or were familiar with his work, will realise that he fully appreciated these dangers. The records of his previous expedition proved him a man capable of meeting and overcoming difficulties. Therefore, it is not to any failure to cope with such difficulties that we must look for an explanation of the irreparable loss which we have sustained. It is just here that, for reasons we may never know, that narrow margin disappeared.

The fact that these men died within reach of plenty is, perhaps, not more difficult to understand than that men and women die of starvation in the midst of the plenty of big cities. It is, perhaps, impossible for a strong, healthy man to realise the insidious sapping power of privation. Cold and hunger are but physical sensations. Once satisfied, they can never be clearly recalled; no pen can reproduce them, and they may be completely blotted out from the memory, leaving not such traces as mental troubles do. One reads that pathetic scrap of the leader's diary through and through, and one is saddened by the thought that his last moments were devoted to answering possible criticism. I trust that we all realise how near those contending with the forces of Nature are to that narrow margin. All successful work of this kind can be traced back step by step, and here and there one can say, definitely, in the light of subsequent knowledge: "Here we were within an ace of failure, perhaps death." Now and then, Nature takes her toll; always it is the best lives that pay.

That narrow margin becomes more obvious the longer one lives in that region. A man slips down a steep snow slope in thick weather, and falls over an icy precipice to meet a swift death in the sea. Two more slide down after him and bring up on a tiny ledge, but a few inches from a similar fate. A party cross the snow lid of a crevasse, and, even while they are on it, it cracks and stars in all directions. Before it falls completely, the bulk of their weight is on the firm footing of the other side, and they continue their journey, leaving behind them a yawning chasm which might have proved their sepulchre. A party get adrift on a piece of floe-ice and are drifting out to sea, helpless, to certain death. At one point it touches firm ice for a few seconds—just time for them to jump, and then drifts right away. A pony breaks through a snow-covered crevasse and meets his fate below. Even as he falls he knocks the man leading him forward, so that, although he falls, he clutches at the other side and crawls out to safety. And so the tale might be continued—every expedition has such records. One learns to call it "Old Provi." But at the back of the mind lies the knowledge of the narrow margin; and no amount of familiarity will breed contempt for it. The Antarctic is

a country of cold, silent beauty; and, in common with the sea, it has this characteristic—that man will never be on terms of equality with it.

To men in a reasonable condition of physical fitness, no previously-known blizzard would necessarily have proved fatal within so short a distance of safety. But that the blizzard which proved so to Captain Scott and his companions was of an exceptional nature is proved by the fact that it lasted for nine days, the usual length of time being three to four. With a reserved strength, there undoubtedly comes a time when it would be justifiable, and even imperative, to abandon everything, and snatch at that one faint chance of finding the supply of food known to be ahead—admittedly a faint chance, but a chance. But can one estimate the effect on men of such a terrible sequence of events, added to the unavoidable privations of such a journey?

We cannot discuss those last eight days spent in that tiny tent, a mere speck on a vast snowy plain, holding lives not only dear to a nation, but valuable to the whole world. Thank God, our ignorance and our limited imaginations render us incapable of fully realising such suffering. What is left us is a noble example—a great legacy.—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE MARSTON.

Letters to the Editor.

MR. ROGER FRY'S CRITICISM.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The controversy between Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Sir William Richmond, and Mr. Roger Fry is so amusing that I hope your columns may long remain open to it. To anyone with a sense of comedy, nothing is more delicious than the spectacle of a virtuously indignant Englishman calling on some other Englishman in the most vituperative terms at his command, to remember that he is a gentleman and not to use abusive language. The spectacle is at its best when the controversy is about Art; for controversy in England always reaches its climax in imputations of lower middle-class tastes; and the lower middle class is the class which produced Hogarth and Turner, the two greatest English painters. The grotesqueness of the present outburst is made complete by the fact that it began with Sir Philip Burne-Jones assailing the Post-Impressionists with an exact reproduction of the invectives which, in the eighteen-seventies, greeted the magnificent series of pictures in the Grosvenor Gallery which gained Sir Philip his title.

Now I, like many other people, would not dare to speak unkindly of Alma-Tadema's work, even if I thought unkindly of it. I should get into trouble with friends of his whom I value much more than I value my reputation as a critic. My object in writing this letter is to call attention to that part of his work which interested me professionally: I mean his stage pictures. His *Cymbeline* at the old Lyceum Theatre, and his *Julius Cæsar* at His Majesty's were triumphs of his art. There was nothing worth attempting after it, except the change of school effected by Mr. Gordon Craig, Mr. Norman Wilkinson, and Mr. Granville Barker. If anyone will walk through the Academy rooms with *Cymbeline* and *Cæsar* in mind, forgetting the Post-Impressionists and the lower middle classes, it will become clearer and clearer, from room to room, that Alma-Tadema was a master of inscenation. And when you think of what those scenes would be if, instead of the ladies who now figure in them, you had Ellen Terry as *Imogen*, you will, perhaps, hit on the secret of our demur to the pictures. Their weakness is the weakness of Alma-Tadema's Dutch judgment of Englishmen and Englishwomen, especially of Englishwomen.

The last thing a foreigner learns—if he ever learns it—is how to class people in the country in which he is a stranger. An Italian trooper or porter, if he can bawl loudly and continuously, will be accepted in Italian opera by English audiences as a perfect gentle knight if only he can be induced to refrain from exhortation until he has left the stage. English noblemen will accept the daughter of a Parisian concierge as a duchess. American ladies of fastidious taste cannot place an Englishman within six

degrees of his real class, and sometimes make appalling matrimonial blunders in consequence. I myself, an Irishman, was hopelessly at sea in England for the first ten years, though in Dublin I could place anybody to a hair's-breadth by instinct. The foreigner invariably over-rates; and difference of sex increases the over-rating. You find English Pooh-Bahs saying, and even writing, that "the Latin races are never vulgar," and so forth. No delusion is more universal or more inevitable.

Now, look again at Alma-Tadema's pictures. You see instantly that he has either over-rated or misrated all his models, especially his female models. When he wanted something rare, something exotic, something strange and haunting, he found her in the first artsome middle-class girl he met in Maida Vale. The more typical the model, the more faithfully and lovingly he drew her, emphasizing the suburban type and suppressing the universal individual. Sir Philip Burne-Jones's illustrious father and his friends had wonderful models: Miss Herbert, Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Stillman. Even in real life they stood distinct from other women as a fine Gothic church stands distinct from a modern street. And their painters loved their distinction and heightened their beauty by getting away from their type to their individual charm. But such beauty, such distinction, reminded Alma-Tadema of the Netherlands, or at least took him away from fairy N.W., where every girl was a goddess. He had under his nose models for one look at whom I would have sold all Kilburn into Siberian slavery; but he would have thought my taste vulgar: that is, Dutch.

The result speaks only too plainly for itself. Had he painted his goddesses as a realist, surrounding them with cottage pianos and plush overmantels, or placing them in Surrey cottages, all would have been well: his pictures would have kept the Art Union in prizes for generations. But as to him they were all Zenobias and Cleopatras and Sapphos, he resolved to affect a hitherto undreamt-of combination of the morbidez of romanticism with the beauty and clearness of classicism, by putting the nymphs of Maida Vale into Roman and Greek scenes and costumes. And so where he saw Faustine, we see Miss Ponsonby de Tompkins; and where nothing but a glimpse of the ornamental water in Regent's Park would have saved Miss P. de T.'s congruity for us, he gave us the Ionian sea. This is what you cannot get away from in Alma-Tadema. Remove his pictures to Holland, and they will come right; for the women in them will be as rich and strange to all the folk there as they were to Alma-Tadema himself. But never will they be to us what he meant them to be until Miss Ponsonby de Tompkins becomes extinct. And even then she will be incredible. She was always an acquired taste.

Meanwhile, do not let us absurdly suppose that this jar which we feel at the Academy is the jar of incompetence. Alma-Tadema did what he wanted to do, and did it extremely well. You may say that he could not draw, and could not paint (who can, if you put your standard as high as that?); but surely it has a merit in him that he wanted not to draw or paint with a Parisian touch, but quite simply to produce an illusion, and that he did produce it very brilliantly. No doubt this simplicity bores Mr. Fry. He misses the design, the draughtsmanship, the color orchestration of his Post-Impressionists, and thereby provokes Sir William Richmond and Sir Philip Burne-Jones to lose patience with him, even to the wild extremity of denouncing the Post-Impressionists as duffing impostors. Now whatever else the Post-Impressionists may be, they are certainly not that. If I were to tear a scrap from one of Matisse's lithographs at the Grafton Gallery, and submit it to Sir William in the midst of a desert, as something I had just picked up, asking him whether it was the work of a man who could draw, he would tell me, before he had cocked his eye at it for half a second, that only a trained professional hand could get that unmistakable whip into the stroke of his chalk. And if I were to cut a square inch from a canvas by Picasso, and submit it under the same conditions to Sir Philip Burne-Jones, he would say that nobody but a hardened expert could lay on paint like that. The best work in the Grafton Gallery is full of skill—even of the insolence of skill. Mr. Fry misses the crepitation of that insolence in Alma-Tadema's work. Being a little in the crepitating line myself, I am on Mr. Fry's side in the

general controversy. But I cannot agree that Alma-Tadema was one of the ordinary Burlington House manufacturers of commercial pictures. He stood out among them in his way, quite as much as Watts or Burne-Jones did in theirs. There was no demand for white marble when he began to paint it: he painted it because he liked it, and because it seemed to him the only substance beautiful enough for Miss Ponsonby de Tompkins to sit on. He did what he liked, and painted what he liked; and we need not grudge him his luck if other people liked what he painted too, and he thereby became popular. Granted that Matisse has designed groups superbly, and that Alma-Tadema can hardly be said to have ever designed a group at all. Granted that Alma-Tadema has painted faces superbly (a very high achievement), whereas in the Grafton Gallery there are faces painted by Matisse which would disgrace a screever! Well, honors are easy. Why recriminate? The Post-Impressionists, stumbling over newly-broken ground, naturally give Alma-Tadema little credit for keeping his balance so perfectly on the asphalt; but work on the asphalt takes a lot of doing, as none know better than those who have come to the end of it. When once we recognise the genuine simplicity and enjoyment that inspired Alma-Tadema's technical accomplishments (which, though they would be useless for Mr. Fry's purposes, and therefore don't interest him, were none the less rare and real), I think we are bound to admit that he was original and sincere, as well as astonishingly handy with his tools, and that, if there was a marked demand for his work, it was a demand that he created, and not one that he was faithless to himself in following. If all his contemporaries had had half his character, English painting would have been considerably the richer to-day.

—Yours, &c.,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

February 12th, 1913.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—With reference to the Alma-Tadema controversy, for me, as a foreigner, the most astounding fact is that, so far as the very slight interest of your public goes, Mr. Fry's views have found hardly any support.

This seems to cast a strange light on the attitude of the cultured Englishman towards the Fine Arts.

But, maybe, I am unfair, and ought to consider that but for the official recognition granted to Alma-Tadema's production his works call as little for serious criticism in your columns as, for instance, musical comedy or second-rate fiction.—Yours, &c.,

FRIEDRICH VON WERSIN.

18, Golder's Green Parade, N.W.

February 10th, 1913.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The publication of Mr. Lytton Strachey's letter in your current issue kindles a desire to express similar feelings of gratitude.

Everyone who is sincerely interested in the aims and spirit of modern art will have thanked Mr. Fry for having so vigorously and lucidly defined Sir Alma Tadema's position, and many must regret that the article has not been reprinted in all the daily papers; it might then have reached the half-educated lower middle classes, who, being, as we are told, so "sound of judgment," would most certainly have welcomed such a splendid instigation to right thinking.—Yours, &c.,

E. WADSWORTH.

1A, Gloucester Walk, Campden Hill, W.

February 9th, 1913.

THE COMING EDUCATION BILL.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Educationists are looking forward with mixed feelings to the coming Education Bill. What sort of a Bill is it going to be? Is it really going to deal with education at all, or is it to be yet one more Religious Controversy Bill? The last few "Education" Bills have been entirely misnamed, and educationists are longing for a measure which

shall improve the facilities offered to the children now (and to be) in our schools.

I note in to-day's issue of *THE NATION* that a Committee of the Cabinet, "with assistance from outside, is considering the great question of National Education." I hope that this outside assistance will come from persons interested in the general education of the nation's children, as distinct from the merely religious teaching which has caused so much trouble and wasted so much time these last ten years.

As a member for several years of the Education Committee in my town, may I here suggest some of the chief ways in which the educational path should be made straight by a future Bill?

1. The teaching regulations must be radically altered to permit of much greater variation in the style, character, and matter of the teaching. At present a clever teacher is severely handicapped by the Code, and cannot give of his best.

2. The maximum number in a class, at least in the senior departments, must again be lowered, and materially, to allow of far more individual attention to scholars.

3. Side by side with this, there must be during the last two or three years of school life, much more freedom for the grading and selection of children, in order to allow for some degree of specialisation.

4. The leaving-age must be raised, at once to 15, and later to 16. All half-time or short-time certificates should be abolished, and clever children who early reach the higher standards should be compelled to proceed to the Higher Education Schools or to some school where they will receive specialised teaching in accordance with their prospective employment.

5. More money must be made available for scholarships, exhibitions, and bursaries to aid in completing the "educational ladder."

6. More money must be made available for the adequate remuneration of the teaching staff. Salaries are to-day scandalously low, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill vacancies.

7. The expense of this improved administration must be borne out of national, not local, moneys. The ratepayer is in most places already heavily burdened, and the fear of some extra pence in the pound on the rates ought not to be allowed to delay necessary reforms.

I am quite aware that, baldly stated, without argument, as I have had to state them here, some of these proposals might raise a howl of indignation in certain quarters. I believe, however, that workers on Education Committees who have had a practical interest in the schools will largely agree with me. The raising of the school-age will not be popular, but it will have to come some day, if education is ever to count for more than it now does. The nation allows its working-class children to leave school for good at an age when their more fortunate brothers and sisters are just commencing a scholastic career which may not end till about the age of twenty-two.

The large increase in the number of school places which this and other proposals would necessitate, the extra cost of teaching (including that of augmented staffs), and the additional scholarships will all mean money, running into millions. But this country can afford it, and will have to afford it if she is to hold her own with the other nations of the world.

I would point out that the money spent will ultimately be financially remunerative. The better education will have its effect on the life of the nation—there will be a tendency to a lessening of crime and poverty. The raising of the school-age will lessen the glut in the unskilled labor market and the competition of juvenile labor. The additional school-places will lead to small local booms in the building trade, and improve the demand for labor in many trades. In fact, many of our social problems will be strongly affected, if not solved, if the Education Question is seriously tackled.

Parliament, which has for so long been content to vote million upon million in support of the mad competition in armaments, must be made to understand the imperative urgency of spending a few millions upon the necessary education of the nation's children.—Yours, &c.,

J. STEPHENSON ROWNTREE.

Leadhall Grange, Harrogate.

February 8th, 1913.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—There is a certain aspect of the proposed reform in education which a genuine Liberal will look on with some misgiving. The ladder to the Universities is to be strengthened. In secondary education facilities are to be ensured for the promising boy. Again, in giving evidence before the Civil Service Commission, Sir John Smithers, in explaining the attitude of the Scottish Education Department, seemed to dwell on the fact that that Department sought especially to give a chance to merit which might be handicapped by circumstance.

Well and good; but is there not a possibility that all this is pure Manchester? In the first place, are not these "facilities" rather for those types of individuals who, by hook or by crook, will "get on," and is it not possible that a premium is placed on young people who possess the examination faculty, whereas those who rather possess the inventive faculty, by which humanity most widely gains, are left alone.

As it is at present, what does the educational ladder mean? Largely this: a certain percentage of shrewd intellects from the "lower classes" are equipped with the qualifications necessary to pass into the professional classes. They become higher civil servants; failing that, they enter the teaching profession. Even the students of the Royal College of Art, when it comes to the question of earning their bread, have to push into Art masterclasses, and, if they have not the faculty of teaching, wither into uncreative hacks. Others, again, flood the over-crowded professions of law and medicine. The Scottish Universities, in particular, turn out shoals of these, and the result is, on the one hand, a multiplication of vexatious fees, business spread out to infinity, instead of being expedited; on the other, a horde of half-famished people, who eye society with wolfish and ravening mien.

What all this comes to really is this, that the higher education of the country is not in accord with the needs of the country. We are essentially a commercial and industrial nation. If it is the best brains that obtain the facilities of the educational ladder, then they ought to be trained to be useful in the chief needs of the country. The way ought to be open to them into industry and commerce, which at present, it would seem, recruit their officers from the second best.

In secondary education, there is something of the same story. A secondary school often seems to think that its *raison d'être* is to pass a certain proportion of its higher pupils through certain examinations. But surely education ought to concern the whole lump. What is necessary is to train the general mass in discipline, in reasoning, in imagination. What is wanted is a liberal education. To-day we live in an age of transition. Many new methods are on trial. It almost seems as if education, other than primary, labored under the error of too many subjects. It will be the task of those organising the new learning to hew out a new syllabus on broad lines, which will still allow scope for the play of individual teaching.

Assuredly that education must be liberal and directly practical *à la fois*. On its culture side it must show the Young Englander what he is, where he stands in this scheme of things, and what he will have to do. There can be no better training for the young soldier of the army of industrialism than an outline of the growth of industrialism. When one considers the enormous scope an old course of Gilchrist lectures embraced in the field of geology, it ought to be possible to do the same thing in the field of civilisation. Thence would radiate the study of design in textiles, in pottery, in building. In another place would branch off the study of commerce, where the great products come from, what are the conditions which control their rise and fall in price, what are the artificial and natural causes which limit trade, what the relations between capital and labor, what the advantages and what the absurdities of competition, how distribution takes place, how payment is made. Mechanics and engineering offer another field, with their special development, and agriculture an equally important one. As in the framing of the general scheme, the acutest minds on industry and commerce will need to be called into council, so in local areas, for the special adaptation of that scheme to the district, will the local Chambers of Commerce and heads of industry. Each and all will need to give the question

thought and study. Amateur and undigested opinion will be useless.

For instance, it is only the profoundest minds of industry which can give a decided opinion as to what form of actual technical instruction should take place in schools, and in what way precisely the average secondary school should connect itself with the life of the nation. It is the business of the educational experts to see that the educational training shall be such as to lead up to "the technical," and to ensure that that education shall be liberal and systematic, and even—that despised word—practical.

And in the scholastic career, as the bent of each individual begins to come out, an important feature should be the watching of the promising individual in the several branches. For he will be the one, more surely than the successful literary examinee, who will develop his industry and make work for two, where before there was but work for one.

Students of the Renaissance marvel at the patience, the industry, the skill of the workers of those days. And yet Leonardo or Benvenuto Cellini, Michael Angelo, all would have given anything to be alive in our day, and be able to avail themselves of our resources. Was the difference between them and us that for them the world was coherent, comprehensible, catholic, for us a medley, disconnected and anarchist?

We live in times when, in some ways, industrial invention is making the conditions of life more sane and sweet. Can we for a larger suffrage set up a new and better commonwealth?—Yours, &c.,

W. M. C.

February 13th, 1913.

THE INSURANCE ACT AND THE HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a note in your last issue in reference to the action of the voluntary hospitals in respect of the treatment of insured persons since the medical benefits under the National Insurance Act came into operation on January 15th last.

I venture to express the opinion that the writer of that note has been misinformed, or, at least, has not quite appreciated the difficulties which the hospitals have had to face in consequence of the Act. I would, therefore, draw attention to the following recommendations which the Council of the British Hospitals Association (which represents over 400 hospitals) has made to the voluntary hospitals of the United Kingdom, and which have been generally approved and adopted by a large number of these institutions. These recommendations are as follows:—

"(1) With reference to the Out-patients the Council is strongly of opinion that upon medical benefit under the National Insurance Act coming into force, insured persons should be examined by a medical officer, but except for accidents, emergencies, or such special treatment as can only be given in a hospital, they should no longer be received in the Out-patient and Casualty Departments, unless accompanied by a certificate, or introduced personally by the medical practitioner who is in attendance. In such cases, after consultation, they should be referred back to their medical practitioner, with an expression of the opinion of the hospital physician or surgeon on the case. And a list of all such insured persons and the practitioners by whom they are sent should be forwarded to the Insurance Committee of the district periodically.

"(2) With reference to In-patients, insured persons, whose cases are urgent and in need of hospital treatment not provided for under the National Insurance Act, should be admitted as heretofore, and the hospitals should keep accurate records of all such persons admitted, and, if possible, the Approved Society to which they belong."

Mr. Lloyd George has recently informed a deputation

"That the main work of the hospitals is not touched by the Act, inasmuch as the treatment afforded to insured persons under the Act is such treatment as can properly be given by a general practitioner of ordinary competence and skill, whereas this is just the kind of treatment that a hospital does not exist to give. Thus insured persons need as much as ever the aid of hospitals in order to obtain the treatment that is given in the in-patient departments, and to a substantial extent that given in the out-patient departments (e.g., all that for which special medical or surgical skill is required). Thus hospitals would only be carrying out their proper duty in con-

tinuing to give this treatment. Those subscriptions, donations, and legacies on which the hospitals have depended would be needed as much as hitherto, and they would have the same claim on the support of the benevolent."

From careful inquiries which have been made by the British Hospitals Association, it is evident that not less than about half the patients at present under treatment in the voluntary hospitals are insured persons. When the provisions of the Act are better understood, and the initial difficulties are overcome, the hospitals will be relieved from the treatment of a considerable number of the more trivial cases, which can be better dealt with by the panel doctors in the patients' own homes, so that the time and attention of the medical staffs can be devoted entirely to the more serious cases, acute diseases, accidents, and surgical operations which cannot be treated in the patients' homes, and which require special appliances and skilled nursing.

It is difficult to see what other course the voluntary hospitals could, under existing circumstances, pursue, especially when it is borne in mind that the physicians and surgeons, who freely give their valuable services to these institutions, are, with but few exceptions, not upon the panels, and decline to treat insured persons, except in case of serious illness or emergency, and where the patient cannot be properly attended to by their panel doctor.

Another important consideration that must not be overlooked is that the medical staffs of the voluntary hospitals, not being upon the panels, are not therefore qualified to sign the patients' certificates which are essential to enable them to receive the other benefits due to them during sickness under the provisions of the Act.—Yours, &c.,

CONRAD W. THIES

(Hon. Secretary, British Hospitals Association).

14, Belsize Park Gardens, N.W.

February 11th, 1913.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—In an interesting article, called "The Soul of the Convict," appearing in your columns under "Life and Letters" on February 1st, occur these words:—

"The barbarity of solitary confinement lasts now only six months of a long sentence."

It will be remembered that the Home Office recently reduced the terms of solitary, or separate (as it is euphemistically called) confinement of convicts from nine months to three months in the case of recidivists (old offenders); from six months to one in the case of intermediates; and from three months to one in the case of the star class (first offenders).

I ascertained by inquiry a few months ago that these reductions are still in force, so that the writer of your article would, fortunately, appear to be in error.

In view, however, of the fact that once before when the period had been reduced from nine months to six, it was quietly put back again to nine, it behoves the public and the Press to keep a very close watch over this matter, which is one of administration only, and requires no Act of Parliament to alter. The existing periods of this cruel form of punishment are all too long, and will, I fear, remain so till Providence has given us imagination enough to understand what it means to be caged up alone in a space of eight feet by twelve, for twenty-three hours out of twenty-four, during ninety, or even during thirty, consecutive days.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

Arcachon, France.

February 6th, 1913.

THE MIRROR OF THE NATION.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—When the Welsh Church Bill and Home Rule are out of the way, the Liberal Party must brace itself up for stern fighting. There are still many wrongs to right, and it is still the only effective instrument for carrying out the reforms which the country needs. It claims to be "the people's party," and the claim is not without justification; but its organisation in the country might well be made more democratic—in some places, at least—and the popular element in the House of Commons might be strengthened

with advantage. It would be a pity if the landed gentleman and the man of commerce were driven from public life; but Parliament is still too much dominated by the possessors of wealth. The old spirit is long in dying, and Liberal Associations are slow to grasp the fact that when they have to adopt a candidate it is no longer necessary to choose a local magnate, or to accept an ambitious barrister sent down by the Whips. How often do we see the organisers, the orators, and the men of affairs straining every nerve to secure the election by a large industrial constituency of some pleasant-mannered, smooth-faced young gentleman, whose chief qualification is that he is the son of someone who has done the State or the party some service, and whose lack of political knowledge and experience makes necessary the constant attendance of a body-guard of abler politicians.

We need in Parliament the best brains of the country, representative of all classes of society. Each Member of the House of Commons now receives a salary of £400 a year, and the wage, although it is not magnificent, is sufficient to enable a poor man to serve his country in Parliament. Hitherto, excepting the Labor Members and some of the Nationalists, the House of Commons has been composed almost entirely of landowners, capitalists, and members of the professions. Let Liberal Associations throughout the country recognise that they have now a wider choice. The population of this country does not consist, on the one hand, of rich men, and, on the other, of manual workers. The lower middle class is large, intelligent, long-suffering, and almost unrepresented in the people's House.

Liberalism is the only political creed which the progressive part of the lower middle class can embrace with satisfaction; and even to the "working class"—using the phrase in its narrow meaning—it is not a creed outworn. Joining the Labor Party by anyone, save trades unionists, implies the acceptance of the Socialist ideal of the nationalisation of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange; and the people of the lower middle class—clerks, commercial travellers, shopkeepers, shop assistants, canvassers, managers, schoolmasters, public officials, agents on commission, masters and mates of the mercantile marine, and members of hundreds of other callings—although, for the most part, democratic in their sympathies, and as anxious as any member of the I.L.P. to abolish poverty—for many of them know from experience what poverty means—are not Socialists. They set high value on the ideals of individual liberty and enterprise, and feel strongly that big men should not be allowed to make slaves of little men. With no lack of sympathy for working men, they feel that the ordinary trades union leader who becomes a Labor candidate does not understand them, and cannot truly represent them. This numerous, hard-working, and intelligent class conceives that it is in some danger of being crushed between the upper and the nether millstones, and it sometimes feels little enthusiasm when, at a three-cornered fight, it has to choose between a Liberal capitalist, a Tory aristocrat, and a Labor candidate who seems to think that nobody but a factory "hand" can be a man and a brother.

The Liberal Party must be the champion of the lower middle class, as well as of "the working man," and of the working man as well as of the lower middle class. Both classes have in their hearts a deep—though sometimes a hidden—admiration of Mr. Lloyd George. They have already forgiven him for his National Insurance Act, and are beginning to bless him for it. The snob with £2 10s. or £3 a week "salary" still growls at being compulsorily insured like the charwoman and the bricklayer; but everyone with £3 a week is not a snob, and many a clerk and shop assistant will be glad of the sick pay and medical benefit given under the Act. The half-humorous cursing of Lloyd George which was heard among the wage-earners when the Act was taking the people's money and giving nothing back, never had the venom which flavors the curses of the plutocrats. There was always the feeling that Lloyd George meant well to the poor, and was fighting their battle in high places.

The Liberal Party can do for the agricultural laborer what the Labor Party cannot do and what the Tory Party will not do. It can, and must, do much also for the town-dwellers. Overcrowding is killing or demoralising the very poor, and rents and rates press with ever-increasing weight upon the people with two, three, four, and five pounds a week. A well-considered, firm land policy will give new hope to

the people; and, with a free choice of candidates, thousands and thousands of hitherto apathetic citizens will fling themselves eagerly into the fray.—Yours, &c.,

C. T.

February 11th, 1913.

AN OFFER TO THE IRISH PARLIAMENT.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I note in the "New York Times" the name of your journal in connection with the return of the Irish Party to the old Parliament House on College Green, Dublin.

If they do return, I think it probable that they would like to have the old original Bible on which the members of the former Parliament were sworn. It is a very large book, and has been in possession of my family for many years, and was finally deposited with a Society in New York, and I think I can get it back if they desire it.—Yours, &c.,

R. M. SMYTHE.

452, Produce Exchange, New York, U.S.A.

January 29th, 1913.

LIBERALS AND LAND POLICY.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—It is with great regret that I observe that *THE NATION* acquiesces in Mr. P. W. Wilson's forecast in the "Daily News" of the Chancellor's land policy. If you are right, it is to be based chiefly on grants for housing, a minimum wage for the agricultural laborer, and rent courts for the farmer. Such a campaign might be started, but it would quickly fizzle out. For if nothing is really done to break down the monopoly in land and give the people, as a whole, cheaper land, then it will not have the support of the land-taxers. It is possible, I suppose, that the Liberals might conduct a land campaign without the help of those you call "fanatics"—it would be interesting to see if they could. But no one who is in touch with the electorate could imagine that the Liberals could carry such a policy against the land-values men.

The Liberal Party are accustomed to attacks from the Right. Ministers enjoy such an attack; that is their business, their stamp of genuineness. It is very different with attacks from the Left, especially when such an attack is based on those sound economic doctrines which have got into the blood of Liberalism. And this would be an attack from the Left, and how sound its basis would be none know better than the readers of *THE NATION*.

Accompanied by certain conditions, the policy outlined might be tolerable; but, apart from these conditions, the following shortcomings would be driven home by Radicals. In another part of your paper you deal handsomely with the Speenhamland Act, and show the fallacy of charity wages. Are charity rents so very different from charity wages? Thus, on your own lines, it is easy to show that grants for housing low-paid laborers would not of themselves do much to improve matters. You give us rent courts just when even old-fashioned squires are beginning to learn that to be up with the times, they must plough up their old pasture land; this is surely not the time for arbitrary land courts to stereotype the great grazing farms, and so further block the way to breaking up the land for more modern cultivation. Even the minimum wage offers a target for criticism. In many cases it would mean that less labor would be employed. Will you allow still more land to be turned down unchecked to grass, and still more labor driven off the soil to flood Liberal constituencies with more blackleg labor?

It must not be forgotten that unless our rating system is reformed, grants for education, co-operation, or communication will be paid for by the towns in increased taxation, and will only go to swell the spoils, not of those who farm the land, but of those who farm the farmers. You will see at a glance that opportunity for attack is not wanting, so long as those products of expertology try to walk alone and unsupported. If the fight should be forced, we can promise you a merry campaign, though I fear it will be a bitter one.

Land reform, in our sense, means cheaper land for those who want to use it; it means no rise of tax, or rent, or rates, nor penalty on any improvement. Such reform cannot be agreeable to the vested interests. No real reform can be agreeable to the vested interests. Liberals must choose between

attacking the vested interests and continuing to tolerate injustice.

We are not back in the year 1907, when the Small Holdings Act went through under the style and title of "genuine land reform." It would not "go" now.

Coupled with such a tax as would burst up the big estates and farms, with such a tax as should smash down the price of land, and with such an employment of the money raised by this tax as should relieve from the burden of the rates all improvements made by small-holders and land-users—in company with these your expertology might be accepted.—Yours, &c.,

JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD.

House of Commons, February 12th, 1913.

STRINDBERG'S "INFERNO."

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—It was Strindberg's express wish that his autobiographical works should be read as a whole, and not in isolation. If anyone will take the trouble to do this, which, after all, is the only fair way of judging the man, he will probably come to the conclusion that they are not the mere phantasmagoria of a Poesque imagination, but the record of a soul's long wrestle in the dark with an unseen foe, who, after all, as in Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven," turns out to be a friend. At the end of his mystical drama, "The Great Highway" (1910), in which Strindberg bids farewell to life and literature, he says:—

"O Thou Eternal! I lose not Thine hand,
Thy hard, stern hand, unless Thou bless me too,—
Bless me, who suffer from Thy gift of life,
And from not being what I fain would be."

Dr. Rahmer, who wrote a monograph of the "Inferno," stated that, in his opinion, Strindberg was not suffering from "paranoia" when he composed that work.—Yours, &c.,

C. F.

45, Chetwynd Road, N.W.
February 11th, 1913.

MAN AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—It is probably a sheer waste of time, but may one venture to point out to your suffragist correspondent, who talks about hatred of the opposite sex being a "sign of degeneracy," that the increase of the political influence of women has coincided with a steady stream of anti-man legislation, culminating in an Act which practically arms every vindictive woman or precocious girl with the cat-o'-nine tails? Mr. C. H. Norman, in his able letter a few weeks ago, spoke of the "over-sexualisation" of Englishmen during recent years. Is not this over-sexualisation the result of the political woman's constant harping on the so-called "sensuality" of men? While this temper remains, it is idle to complain of sex-hatred in men, and downright hypocrisy to pretend that comradeship between men and women is the desired goal.—Yours, &c.,

X. Y. Z.

February 12th, 1913.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—May I ask your anonymous correspondent, "A Member of the Sociological Society," to give the names of the men who "pour out torrents of invective and abject fear when women alarm them by asking for political equality"?

No doubt the opponents of woman suffrage say things which are not liked by its advocates; but if the attitude of men who are resisting woman suffrage is to be tested by the standard of your correspondent, the investigation should be pursued into the peculiarities of the *personnel* of the men's leagues for woman suffrage and kindred societies.

Really the issue is quite a simple one. Those who are fighting woman suffrage believe that men alone should govern the country. Those who are supporting woman suffrage consider that men and women, or women alone when such advocates get on the sentimental plane, should rule the country together.

Personally, I rank myself in the former party; but I have never understood how any man can support woman

suffrage, or how any woman can oppose it. The problem is not one of politics; but it is a question of sex power.

Women are right in struggling hard; because their victory, if an effective one, should mean a big thing to them. In the long run, society would smash under the strain; but that may not matter to them. It is because I think that society should persist on natural evolutionary lines, accompanied by occasional revolutionary jerks, that I find myself in the "anti" camp.—Yours, &c.,

C. H. NORMAN.

National Liberal Club,

Whitehall Place, S.W.

February 9th, 1913.

Poetry.

VERSES FROM THE FINNISH.

I. EXILE.

THE crescent moon, and one white star
Shine o'er the river-bend;
In mine own land that lies so far
The moon was like a friend!
She silvered all the whispering lake,
She glanced into our room;
My curse on those who came to make
Me tread this path of gloom!

The foreign river bears along
No pike or powan gay;
And no one knows the cuckoo's song
Here, in this land so gray.
But Oh! what matter bird and stream?
Who marks me where I roam?
'Tis, day or night, one aching dream
Of kindred, love, and home.

Who brought me to this alien place?
'Twas death in human guise.
My curse upon his bearded face!
His slow, uncaring eyes!
My curse upon this land that breeds
Robber, and serf, and slave!
My ghost shall blight the very weeds
That flower upon my grave.
(From the "Kanteletar.")

II. FINLAND'S NEW YEAR, 1913.

"O STRANGE New Year! reveal the fate you bring!"
Steep as mountain paths, that swing
Up and out of woodland vales,
On toward the peak, and cling
Where the foothold nearly fails
On giddy slopes, under black ridges bare;
Such is your promised fate! for this prepare!
See, like ashes, whitely gray,
Leads your path so far away—
And yet, through whirling mist of snow,
Over ridges never spanned,
We must follow, since we know
Yonder lies the Promised Land.

"O strange New Year! unveil the gifts of Time!"
Yet another steep to climb,
Curving round the mountain side,
Soaring to the white, sublime
Towers of summit, all untried;
Rising from woodland fields so far below,
Where quiet mortals plough and reap and sow.
Here 'tis cold and echoing stone
Round the wanderer, all alone—
But oh! the sweep of space unfurled!
The boundless blue and clear!
How far away that little world,
Eternity how near!

From a poem by ARVID MORNE.
(Translated by ROSALIND TRAVERS.)

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The New Freedom." By President Woodrow Wilson. (Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "How England Saved China." By J. Macgowan. (Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.)
 "Of Six Medieval Women." By Alice Kemp-Welch. (Macmillan. 8s. 6d. net.)
 "With the Turks in Thrace." By Ellis Ashmead Bartlett. (Heinemann. 10s. net.)
 "With the Conquered Turk." By Lionel James. (Nelson. 2s. net.)
 "With the Victorious Bulgars." By Lieutenant Wagner. (Constable. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "The Woman Movement." By Ellen Key. (Putnam. 6s. net.)
 "The Genesis of Parliamentary Reform." By G. S. Veitch. (Constable. 10s. 6d. net.)
 "Unionist Policy, and Other Essays." By the Right Hon. F. E. Smith, M.P. (Williams & Norgate. 5s. net.)
 "The Catfish." By Charles Marriott. (Hurst & Blackett. 6s.)
 "The Honey-Star." By Tickner Edwardes. (Hutchinson. 6s.)
 "La Comédie de celui qui épousa une femme muette." Comédie en deux Actes. Par Anatole France. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 1fr. 50.)
 "Le Duc Rollon." Roman. Par Léon de Tineau. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 3fr. 50.)
 "Otto Ludwig als Thüringer in seinem Leben und seinem Werken." Von Wilhelm Greiner. (Halle: Moritz. M. 3.)

* * *

THE past week has given us some interesting additions to Messrs. Williams & Norgate's "Home University Library," as well as to its cheaper rival, Messrs. Jack's "The People's Books." Both series give a good deal of attention to science, and there are volumes on "Chemistry," "Comparative Religion," "Psychology," "The Nature of Mathematics," "The Origin and Nature of Life," and other topics that only appeal to students. But the reader of less severe tastes is not neglected. Mr. Chesterton's "The Victorian Age in Literature," for example, with which we propose to deal in a separate article, can easily be read with one's feet on the fender, though Mr. Chesterton's tone is combative, and some of his readers may not retain the composure that befits that attitude of ease. As a sedative, we would recommend Miss Rosaline Masson's little volume on "Wordsworth" in the companion series. Though obviously written by a great admirer of Wordsworth, it follows the beaten track of criticism, quotes the familiar passages, and shows us the man whom Lamb irreverently called "a rascally old Lake poet" in his greatness and in his defects, "bleak, lonely, and independent; pompous, self-sufficient, and humorless; swelling from the humble vale; majestic in his isolated nearness to the skies."

* * *

ANOTHER good piece of criticism is Mr. John Bailey's "Dr. Johnson and His Circle." Mr. Bailey goes to work in the right way. He begins with a chapter on "Johnson as a National Institution," in which he shows that Johnson "has gradually attained a kind of apotheosis, a kind of semi-legendary position, almost rivalling that of John Bull himself, as the embodiment of the essential features of the English character." But, at the same time, Mr. Bailey seems to us to rate Johnson's own writings at a good deal less than their value. "But for Boswell," he says, "the great man's name might soon have been unknown to any but bookish men. It is due to Boswell that journalists quote him, and cabmen tell stories about him. Johnson had himself almost every quality that makes for survival except genius; and that, by the happiest of fates for himself and for us, he found in his biographer."

* * *

Now, to deny genius to Johnson and to claim it for Boswell is an almost obsolete line in modern criticism, thoroughly seized of the greatness of Johnson's character and literary quality. We imagine that Mr. Bailey took it in a mood of impatience with Macaulay. Boswell, as Mr. Birrell says, has a position in English literature that cannot be disputed, and he was as much a literary artist as either Macaulay or Carlyle, who both wrote contemptuously about him. But Mr. Birrell has no doubt at

all that we should have remembered Johnson, had there been no Boswell. Here is his view of the matter:—

"Johnson the author is not always fairly treated. Phrases are convenient things . . . and one of these phrases is, that whilst everybody reads Boswell, nobody reads Johnson. The facts are otherwise. Everybody does not read Boswell, and a great many people do read Johnson. If it be asked, What do the general public know of Johnson's nine volumes octavo? I reply, Beshrew the general public! What in the name of the Bodleian has the general public got to do with literature? . . . It is not a question of the general public, but of the lover of literature. Do Mr. Browning, Mr. Arnold, Mr. Lowell, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Stephen, Mr. Morley, know their Johnson? 'To doubt would be disloyalty.' And what these big men know in their big way, hundreds of little men know in their little way. We have no writer with a more genuine literary flavor than the great Cham of literature."

* * *

Two biographies, one in each series, might well be read as useful supplements to one another. These are Mr. Herbert Fisher's "Napoleon" and Major G. W. Redway's "Wellington and Waterloo." Mr. Fisher is, with Dr. Holland Rose, one of our leading authorities on Napoleon's career. His former book on "Bonapartism" is an excellent summary of the political principles and the intellectual and social forces that made Bonapartist Government possible, while this new biography cannot be neglected by even the most advanced students of the subject. It only runs to about 250 pages, but anyone who masters these pages will have a better notion of Napoleon's career than could be derived from many larger and more pretentious volumes. Major Redway's book is almost entirely occupied with Wellington's military operations, only four pages being given to the part he played in politics.

* * *

IN an excellent study of "The Literature of Germany" Professor J. G. Robertson takes English readers to task for thinking that German literature is of subordinate value and less worthy of study than other modern literatures. This attitude is shown, he thinks, by the small output of books dealing with German poetry in England, and by the inferiority of our English translations from the German compared with those from the French, Italian, and Spanish. Yet modern German literature is well worth our attention. Professor Robertson admits that the German novel of to-day does not show much healthy promise, but there is an abundance of original lyric poetry produced in Germany, and perhaps Professor Robertson does not claim too much for the German drama when he says that "it easily holds its place as the first in Europe." Here, at any rate, we are not so bad as Professor Robertson makes out. Sudermann, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, and other contemporary German dramatists have been acted in this country, and English versions of their plays have been published.

* * *

"Was Pope a Poet?" is a question that used to be asked more frequently in the days of our grandfathers than it is to-day. Mr. F. G. Hodgson asks it, and replies in the affirmative, in a collection of essays called "Thames-Side in the Past," recently published by Messrs. Allen. For our own part, we care little whether he was a poet or not. We are content to regard him as a very entertaining writer, as we do Lady Mary Montagu, Horace Walpole, and other Twickenham celebrities about whom Mr. Hodgson writes—though we are afraid we must except Miss Hannah More, in spite of the fact that, as Mr. Hodgson tells us, "she had been the friend of many excellent clergymen."

* * *

ALTHOUGH Twickenham has been the home of more than its share of famous writers, we have read with most interest the chapter which Mr. Hodgson devotes to its minor celebrities. These include Sir John Hawkins, Johnson's biographer, his daughter, Letitia Matilda Hawkins, whose "Memoirs" throw some interesting light on the social history of the eighteenth century, and Paul Whitehead, secretary and steward of the Monks of Medmenham Abbey, whom Churchill lampooned in the lines:—

"May I (can worse disgrace on manhood fall?)
Be born a Whitehead and baptised a Paul."

To this Mr. Hodgson replies that in all this abuse there is something of party politics, and that it was not much short of a disgrace to manhood to be born a Churchill and baptised a Charles.

Reviews.

PEER GYNT IN RHYME.

"Peer Gynt." By HENRIK IBSEN. A New Translation by R. ELLIS ROBERTS. (Secker. 5s. net.)

In attempting to render "Peer Gynt" into English, with all its "luxuriant complexity of rhyme"—to use his own expression—Mr. Ellis Roberts has undertaken an extraordinarily difficult task. He is evidently animated by a single-hearted enthusiasm which inclines one sympathetically towards his work. He shows, too, a great deal of ingenuity, and no small literary power. Of the measure of his success I cannot speak with confidence, because my familiarity with the original renders me sensible of shortcomings where, perhaps, the ordinary reader may see nothing but beauties. It is with the ordinary reader that the ultimate decision lies; for clearly Mr. Roberts does not write for those who know the original, or even the previous translation, but for those who do not. At the same time, the lover and student of Ibsen has a right to state his impression for what it is worth; and my impression is that Mr. Roberts has, perhaps, rather shown the way for another than achieved a definitive success. Just as he has admittedly built in some measure on the unrhymed translation by my brother and myself, so I feel that some still more skilful manipulator of rhyme and rhythm may one day build upon his translation, accepting its not infrequent felicities, and replacing by still more ingenious renderings its not infrequent makeshifts and crudities. It is certain that "Peer Gynt" loses enormously by the suppression of its rhymes; it is certain that if they can be restored without a too conspicuous loss of clearness, directness, and naturalness, an immense service will have been rendered both to Ibsen and to English readers; but I cannot but doubt whether Mr. Roberts's rendering quite fulfils that essential condition.

In the preface to the unrhymed translation I wrote as follows:—

"The frequency of final light syllables in Norwegian implies an exceptional abundance of double rhymes, and Ibsen has taken full advantage of this peculiarity. . . . The tin-tinabulation of these double rhymes gives to most of the scenes a metrical character which it might puzzle Mr. Swinburne himself to reproduce in English. Moreover, the ordinary objections to rhymed translations seemed to apply with exceptional force in the case of 'Peer Gynt.' The characteristic quality of its style is its vernacular ease and simplicity. It would have been heartbreaking work to substitute for this racy terseness the conventional graces of English poetic diction, padding here and perverting there."

Now Mr. Roberts may at once be acquitted of any over-indulgence in "conventional graces"; his stumbling-block has been one which I did not foresee. Resolute to reproduce the double rhymes of the original so far as possible, in spite of the comparative poverty of English in unstressed endings, he has constantly been forced to display a strained ingenuity which not even the influence of Browning has acclimatised in serious English verse. It may be said that much of the verse of "Peer Gynt" is not serious, but comic. There is a little juggling with terms in this plea; but, even admitting it, we must fall back on the fact that, whether serious or comic, Ibsen's rhymes are almost always natural and flowing, whereas Mr. Roberts's are often very much the reverse. A test case may be found in the first scene of the second act, perhaps the most haunting in the whole poem. Mr. Roberts has preserved the rhyme-scheme almost exactly—but at what cost, the unrhymed and literal version may help the reader to judge:—

PEER.—Go!
INGRID.—Like this? What are you saying?
Whither?
PEER.—Where you will for me!
INGRID.—False one!
PEER.—Useless tears and praying.
Each must go his own way, free!
INGRID.—Sin—and sin will re-unite us!
PEER.—Devil take all thoughts that bite us!
INGRID.—Who is that one, pray?
All save one—
INGRID.—And who is she, dear?
PEER.—'Tis not you!
INGRID.—Who is it, pray?
PEER.—Go! Go off the self-same way!
To your father!

PEER.—Get you from me!
INGRID.—After this, Peer? Whither?
PEER.—Where you will for me!
INGRID.—Oh, what falsehood!
PEER.—Useless railing!
Each alone must go his way!
INGRID.—Sin—and sin again unites us!
PEER.—Devil take all recollections!
Devil take the tribe of women—All but one—
INGRID.—Who is that one, pray?
PEER.—'Tis not you!
INGRID.—Who is it then?
PEER.—Go! Go thither, whence you came!
Oh! To your father!
INGRID.—Dearest, sweetest—
PEER.—Peace!

INGRID.— This to me, dear—I
PEER.—Peace!
INGRID.— You can't want this to be, dear.
What you're saying. Can and do.
INGRID.—First to lure, and then forsake me!
PEER.—Well, what offer can you make me?
INGRID.—Hegstad Farm, and more's for you.
PEER.—Where's your prayer-book? Does your hair swim, like gold, o'er neck and throat?
Look you shyly anywhere? Hold your mother's petticoat? Speak!
INGRID.—No, but—
PEER.—Then with the Vicar. Read you this last spring?
INGRID.—No: my—
PEER.—Are you bashful in your glances?
When I ask, can you deny?
INGRID.—Heav'n's! 'tis one of his mad trances—
PEER.—Does your presence sanctify?
Speak!
INGRID.—No, but—
PEER.—The rest a trick are.
INGRID.—Know! you will, if you forsake me
Suffer.
PEER.—I don't care a pin.
INGRID.—You may goods and honor win
If you'll have me.
PEER.—They won't make me.
INGRID.—Oh, you lured me!
PEER.—You were willing.
INGRID.—I was desperate!
PEER.—Frantic I.
INGRID.—Oh, the price you'll pay is high!
PEER.—Glad! I'll pay ten thousand shilling.
INGRID.—Is your purpose set?
PEER.—Like stone.
INGRID.—Good! The equal fates invite us!
PEER.—Devil take all thoughts that bite us!
Devil take all girls, all spite us!
INGRID.—All save one!
PEER.—Yes; all save one!

You cannot mean it, surely.
What you're saying?
PEER.—Can and do.
INGRID.—First to lure—and then forsake me!
PEER.—And what terms have you to offer?
INGRID.—Hegstad Farm, and more besides.
PEER.—Is your psalm-book in your kerkchief?
Where's the gold-mane on your shoulders?
Do you glance adown your apron?
Do you hold your mother's skirt-fold?
Speak!
INGRID.—No, but—
PEER.—Went you to the Pastor This last spring-tide?
INGRID.—No, but, Peer—
PEER.—Is there shyness in your glances?
When I beg, can you deny?
INGRID.—Heaven! I think his wits are going!
PEER.—Does your presence sanctify?
Speak!
INGRID.—No, but—
PEER.—What's all the rest, then?
INGRID.—Know you, it will cost your neck
Should you fall me?
PEER.—What do I care?
INGRID.—You may win both wealth and honor
If you take me—
PEER.—Can't afford.
INGRID.—Oh, you lured me!
PEER.—You were willing.
INGRID.—I was desperate!
PEER.—Frantic I.
INGRID.—Dearly shall you pay for this!
PEER.—Dearest payment cheap I'll reckon.
INGRID.—Is your purpose set?
PEER.—Like flint.
INGRID.—Good! We'll see then who's the winner!
PEER.—Devil take all recollections!
Devil take the tribe of women!
INGRID.—All but one!
PEER.—Yes, all but one!

The reader must judge for himself whether the gain in rhyme compensates, or more than compensates, for the manifest strain by which the rhyme is in many cases dragged in. "Sin, and sin will re-unite us" is one of the few positive errors in Mr. Roberts's work; but a stroke of the pen would correct that. On the other hand, "Devil take all girls, all spite us" is a singularly feeble phrase; while the meaning of Ingrid's "Good! The equal fates invite us!" entirely escapes me. Then, again, "The rest a trick are" is an empty jingle invented to rhyme with "vicar"; and the "ten thousand shilling," though it certainly rhymes with "willing," rings very false. May I suggest a somewhat less manifest makeshift?

INGRID.—Oh, you lured!
PEER.—I'd but to beckon.
INGRID.—I was desperate!
PEER.—Frantic I.
INGRID.—Oh, the price you'll pay is high!
PEER.—Dearest payment cheap I'll reckon."

Of Mr. Roberts's treatment of the exquisite lyrical passages, the following may serve as a specimen. It is Solveig's speech when she comes on ski to Peer Gynt's hut in the mountains:—

"I was called by the word you sent through my sister;
I was called, I was called in peace and in riot;
I was called when I met your mother and kist her,
And her words bred dreams that still called me in quiet.
Desolate days and nights heavy and drear,
Called me away, and bade me come here.
You must be all; you must love and console me.
To leave little Helga, ah! that was the worst;
But 'twas worse when from my father I stole me;
And worst to leave her at whose breast I was nursed—
Ah, no! The worst sorrow, the hardest endeavor,
God forgive me! was from them all to sever."

The thrilling simplicity of this passage may well be the translator's despair. It is sadly marred by such phrases as "in peace and in riot" replacing the "in storm and calm" of the original; and the interpolation "and kist her," so patently imposed by the rhyme, lends a touch of mawkishness to Solveig's devotion. The literal version is meagre enough; but does it gain by the padding?

"One message you sent me by little Helga;
Others came after in storm and in stillness.
All that your mother told bore me a message,
That brought forth others when dreams sank upon me.

Nights full of heaviness, blank, empty days,
Brought me the message that now I must come

"You must be all to me, friend and consoler.
The worst was leaving my little sister—
But parting from father was worse, still worse;
And worst to leave her at whose breast I was borne—
Oh no, God forgive me! the worst I must call
The sorrow of leaving them all, ay all."

The last couplet renders the original practically word for word. Mr. Roberts rejects its simplicity for the sake of reproducing the double rhyme ("kalde—alle"). Is the gain worth the sacrifice?

The lighter passages of the poem are, of course, more favorable to Mr. Roberts's manner. His version is always ingenious, and often spirited. Here, for instance, is a quite felicitous passage, where Peer Gynt, in his character of prophet, is promising Anitra a soul:—

"PEER GYNT.—True enough—you will never be able to dig
Very deeply—your soul, I'm afraid, won't be big;
But take heart; it really will just be the same to you;
It will be large enough not to bring shame to you.

"ANITRA.—The prophet is good—

"PEER GYNT.—Don't hesitate girl!

"ANITRA.—But I'd rather—

"PEER GYNT.—Come, out with it! Tell me the whole—

"ANITRA.—Well, I don't care so much about having a soul;
Give me rather—

"PEER GYNT.—Yes, what?

"ANITRA.—(Pointing to his turban) That beautiful pearl!

"PEER GYNT.—(Ecstasied, handing her the jewel) Anitra! True
daughter of Eve! How you show it!

As a magnet you draw me; for I am a man.

And as it was put by a much esteemed poet:

'Das Ewigweibliche ziehet uns an!'

A fairly successful rendering of the Pastor's speech in the last act is marred by one ridiculous lapse of taste, which must certainly be corrected at the earliest opportunity. The Pastor has told how the man who maimed himself to avoid conscription risked his life every day to carry his children round the face of a precipice to school. He continues, in the literal version:—

"Thus he toiled, year by year, till they were men.
Now might he well have looked for some return.
In the New World, three prosperous gentlemen
Their school-going and their father have forgotten."

Mr. Roberts renders the last two lines as follows:—

"In the New World, three prosperous attorneys
Forget their Norse, their Father, and those journeys."

They may have been forgetful of their parent; but the consideration they showed for the exigencies of English rhyme in unanimously taking to the profession of the law cannot be sufficiently admired.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

JOHN DONNE, THE ELIZABETHAN.

"The Poems of John Donne." Edited by H. J. C. GRIERSON.
(Clarendon Press. 2 Vols. 18s. net.)

ONE of the most remarkable of the English pictures in the recent "Post-Impressionist" exhibition depicts "John Donne arriving in Heaven." "I don't know who John Donne is," a sturdy member of the public was lately heard to remark in front of it, "but he seems to be getting there." Unconsciously, he summed up Donne's recent history. Of all the great English poets, his name is least known beyond "literary" circles; but he is certainly "getting there." If one has entered, any time these last years, a railway carriage, and found some studious vagabond deep in a little blue book, it generally turns out to be Mr. Chambers's invaluable edition in the Muses' Library. And now Professor Grierson and the Delegates of the Clarendon Press have given us, clothed in the most attractive garb possible, a perfect text of the poems, and an immense body of elucidatory comment.

Such service is merited. It proceeds, perhaps, from our modern clearer perception of the true nature of that Elizabethan literature of which Donne was a chief glory. The writers, principally the dramatists, of that great period between 1580 and 1640 have been treated without discrimination. From Lamb and Swinburne, who revered almost all

as gods, they have passed into the hands of scholars, who find each equally a subject for annotation and conjecture. At length we are beginning to discern their degrees and kinds, and to note the limits and nature of the short period when the Elizabethans found their highest expression—a period whose spirit is almost completely the spirit of Donne. For the drama, the crown of the time, was at its best for little more than a decade. Between, roughly, 1598 and 1613, all the dramatists were doing their best work. The spirit of power came upon them startlingly. Outside that period there are only the isolated magnificence of Marlowe and the Indian summer of Ford. Within it came the best work of Shakespeare, the Tragedies, and the only good work of Webster, Jonson, Chapman, and Beaumont. Even Middleton, Dekker, and Fletcher were fired above themselves. The history of this efflorescence is perfectly clear and entirely surprising. The 'eighties and 'nineties were given over to the blood-and-thunder melodrama, the infinitely dreary history-play, and then the unimportant sweetness of the romantic comedy. Shakespeare's genius touched the second of these types with excitement, and the third with a clear prettiness; but, in general, the nonage of the Elizabethan drama was marked by all the dullness and sentimentality of youth. But as the century died, patriotism and sugar lost their savor; and, rather suddenly, a new taste came in. The soul woke in Elizabethan plays and poetry, and the usual trouble ensued. That extraordinary gloomy unknown genius, Marston, who profoundly impressed his contemporaries, set the fashion in drama. He dished up the old blood-and-thunder play with new condiments, intellectual passion, satire, dirt, bitterness, and wit. Ben Jonson's additions to the "Spanish Tragedy," and such late "comedies" of Shakespeare as "Measure for Measure," have the same flavor. Marston invented the witty, malcontent, bitter-tongued, tragic hero, with his graveyard meditations on mortality. In the general refurbishing-up of the melodramas of the 'eighties, one old revenge-play fell to Shakespeare's lot. He perfected the hero on Marstonian lines, and the character—a Prince of Denmark—has since achieved some fame. Being a decade of tragedy, the only one in our history, this was also an age of farce. Ben Jonson's farces of "humors" had a short glory, till they, too, with tragedies, were swallowed up in the sickly-sweet tragicomedies and romances with which Fletcher drowned truth and passion. Webster, always a slightly old-fashioned figure, who brings up the rear with his two great tragedies of 1611-1613, already out of date, seems the last of Earth gazing out over a sea of saccharine.

One must understand this period, his background, to understand Donne. The soul of its art was the soul of his. Webster repeatedly steals from his published poems. His wit was essentially of that curious kind the austere Chapman somewhere praises:—

"Your wit is of the true Pierian spring
That can make anything of anything."

Hamlet, with his bitter flashes, his humor, his meta-physical inquisitiveness, and his passion, continually has the very accent of the secular Donne; but that he is an avenger, not a lover. To Ophelia he must have been Donne himself. Indeed, Donne, the bulk of whose good poetry seems to have been written between 1595 and 1613, heralded, and in some part led, this age, when English literature climbed and balanced briefly on the difficult pinnacle of sincerity. Poetry is always a few years ahead of drama. But Donne applied the same spirit the dramatists applied to the whole world, almost solely to love. He is, for width and depth, incomparably the greatest love-poet in English. Every pain or pleasure contained in or relevant to that emotion come under his notice. He can praise in lines where all the music of verse of the last three centuries seems to ring together:

"So may thy mighty, amazing beauty move
Envy in all women, and in all men, love!"

or harp on that external perplexity of human relationships:

"What hate can hurt our bodies like our love?"

He belonged to an age when men were not afraid to mate their intellects with their emotions. In his own words, he "loved to be subtle to plague himself." He would startle the soul from her lair with unthinkable paradoxes, and pursue her, with laughter and tears, along all the difficult coasts between sense and madness. At one moment he

knows the most unworldly ecstasy of the communion of two souls:—

"And whilst our soules negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay!
All day the same our postures were,
And we said nothing, all the day."

At another he contemplates the consummation of human love within the black, bright walls of a flea. He compares his lady to a primrose, an angel, the number five, Mary Magdalen, a ginger-bread figure, Newfoundland, the stationary leg of a compass, God. And one can never doubt his sincerity.

One of the minor merits of this edition is that it puts within our reach the two great portraits of this extraordinary man, surely the most fascinating of all portraits of English poets—the one of an eighteen-year-old countenance, sensual, witty, passionate, informed by an inward fire of intellect; the other, made shortly before death, facing eternity with an incredible, ferocious mirth. But Mr. Grierson's chief claim to our praise is his text. He has spent several years over it, collating and arranging the many manuscripts. Never was work better worth doing. A careful examination of the text reveals practically no errors, whether of judgment or carelessness, and innumerable convincing restorations and emendations. There is scarcely a poem where he has not repeatedly amended Mr. Chambers's text. His services are three-fold. He has used the manuscripts to improve on all the printed editions, notably in three important instances in Donne's greatest poem, "The Ecstasy." He has corrected or defended readings by means of a thorough knowledge of Donne's prose works, and of the scholastic thought which permeated his mind. And he has that characteristic of a good editor—he prefers the harder reading, and justifies it. There is also a mass of commentary, chiefly useful again where it elucidates Donne's queer mental processes from scholastic theology and from his sermons. Here there are one or two lapses and signs of hurry. For instance, he might explain "boord" ("The Progress of the Soul," XXVII.). And he promises a note on a new punctuation in the third letter to the Countess of Bedford, but never gives it. These are specks. A more general fault is the slight lack of lucidity in that part of Volume II. given up to an account of the manuscripts and editions and the text. He describes too much, and tabulates too little. It scarcely detracts from the value of his laborious researches. He is equally patient and clear-headed on the canon of Donne's poems; a trifle too sceptical, if anything. But he makes out only too good a case for giving the lovely lyric, "Absence," to John Hoskyns. The one portion of these two volumes that is not entirely necessary is the fifty pages of introduction on "The Poetry of Donne." To have had the main facts of his life put down would have been more useful; or even more detailed and technical observations on his metre and style. Mr. Grierson points out elsewhere how the superb "Sappho to Philenis" has influenced Swinburne's "Anactoria." As a matter of fact, it is even closer to "Eroton." Donne's metrical power is marvellous, and Swinburne learnt only some of his lessons. His passionate colloquialism of style has influenced even later poetry.

Mr. Grierson's general remarks about the "philosophy of Donne's love-poetry" are not sufficiently illuminating. Moreover, he is reprehensibly out of sympathy with some sides of that many-colored character. He misses the point of that superb and extraordinary satiric poem, "The Progress of the Soul"; and he undervalues "The Second Anniversary," one of the greatest long poems in English. Worst of all, he is prudish about Donne; a serious handicap in an editor or critic of the Elizabethans. It is so easy to distinguish between obscenity and non-obscenity; so hard and so much more important to distinguish between cleanness and dirtiness. But, on the whole, this edition is one of those triumphs of industry, clear thinking, and literary knowledge, which occur only a few times in a generation, and establish the nobility of scholarship. To obtain a perfect text of the obscure Donne was one of the chief needs of literature. Our gratitude and praise go out together to Mr. Grierson; to the Clarendon Press too. The volumes are lovely in appearance, outside and in. Two things can complete this joint achievement—the extension of the edition to include Donne's prose works, and the issue of the text alone of the poems in a cheap, small volume. Donne's glory is ever increasing. He was the one

English love-poet who was not afraid to acknowledge that he was composed of body, soul, and mind; and who faithfully recorded all the pitched battles, alarms, treaties, sieges, and fanfares of that extraordinary triangular warfare.

THE SNOW MOUNTAINS OF DUTCH NEW GUINEA.

"The Land of the New Guinea Pygmies." By Captain C. G. RAWLING, C.I.E., F.R.G.S. (Seeley. 16s. net.)

WHEN Jan Carstenz sailed past the South-West coast of New Guinea, he saw, not far inland, a great range of mountains running East and West—a range so high that its tops were covered by a snow-field, unless, indeed, the white cap were not snow but chalk, or some such substance, as some thought it must be, remembering the tropical character of the New Guinea Coast. That was in 1623, and not till 1909 did a white man set foot on these snow mountains. In that year another Dutchman, Lorentz, reached Wilhelmina Peak (15,420 feet) on his third expedition, and camped—injured and in danger of his life—among its snows. The highest peak of all, some 16,000 feet in height, bears the name of Carstenz, and it was to this neighborhood—to the peak itself if possible—that the expedition went, whose adventures, sufferings, and achievements Captain Rawling here relates.

The expedition was organised by the British Ornithologists' Union and the Royal Geographical Society, names which indicate sufficiently its main objects. No more promising field than Dutch New Guinea, the Western section of the island, lies open at the present day to the naturalist and the explorer; to a far greater extent than the British and German sections, it is an unknown land. But if it is rich in opportunities for discovery, so is it also in the difficulties and dangers which threaten the explorer. In the region described by Captain Rawling, the coastal strip is part and parcel of the tropics; sixty or seventy miles from the sea are the mountain snowfields; between the two lies a stretch of impenetrable jungle, swamps, and great rivers, that are suddenly and constantly swollen to furious inundations by the rains—a region whose gloom is in strange contrast with the gorgeous colors of its Birds of Paradise. In the plains are tribes flourishing in a Stone Age; in the mountains Captain Rawling found a race of little men, who are the "pygmies" of the book. Woolly-haired, broad-headed, in height some 4 ft. 8½ ins. (as against the 5 ft. 6½ ins. of the plainsmen), they are apparently to be classed with the Negritos of the Andamans, Philippines, and Malay Peninsula.

Captain Rawling's story is one of a brave struggle against tremendous odds. In fifteen months much was achieved, and much valuable information gained; but the peaks of the Snow Mountains were not reached. Whether they would have been gained if every detail of the expedition had been carefully thought out and provided for, it is impossible to say; but the sufferings of the party would have been less and their work probably more fruitful. "I am of opinion," said Lorentz once, speaking of his own journeys, "that an enterprise of this kind can only succeed if every detail had been carefully considered, discussed, and arranged; nothing should be left to chance." That is a sound rule; but on this British expedition it does not seem to have been closely followed. The main problem was this: Of the many great rivers that flow from the neighborhood of the Snow Mountains to the Arafura Sea, to find that one which would carry the expedition close up to the foot-hills, whence the advance would be pushed forward to the heights on foot. The expedition chose, and chose wrongly. Before the start it had been decided to try the Utakwa River; but, apparently, information obtained in Java led to a change of plan, and the Mimika was selected—a river which woefully deceived by the breadth of its outfall into the sea. For the Mimika does not flow from the mountains; it is merely a jungle-fed stream, and impossible, therefore, as a base for an attack upon the mountain chain. But such a mistake could surely be retrieved. Captain Rawling says little about Lorentz's journeys, and it is a pity that he did not devote an appendix to them; for it is useful to turn to Lorentz just to see how these things should be done. Lorentz, too, was in doubt from what river he should strike for Wilhelmina Peak.

So he tested more than one—with the aid of a steam-launch. But the British expedition had no steam-launch; it only obtained a motor-boat in June, and that came to grief at the end of August. So the party based themselves on the Mimika, though the danger which it threatened to their hopes was discovered almost at the start, and strove to find a way to the snow mountains by pushing as far up-stream as was possible, and then hewing a path through the jungle, foot by foot, almost inch by inch, Eastwards and still Eastwards, towards some river that, as they hoped, might give them a clearer passage to their goal.

Then, as to transport, see Lorentz again. His second expedition, (1907) he says, was invaluable, if only because it showed the necessity for using Dyaks from Borneo as carriers rather than Malay coolies; and in his third expedition (1909), the bulk of his men were Dyaks. They were used at home to the kind of life which they were to lead while in New Guinea; they were accustomed to the jungle, and experts on the rivers. But Captain Rawling and his colleagues had to put up with Malay coolies, and of the first batch of them he says: "The maimed, the halt, and the blind of the East seemed to have been specially selected for the work in hand"; out of a hundred, fifty had to be sent back at once, and the remainder were "entirely ignorant of any form of river-work." It is true that Dyaks were eventually provided—at the beginning of 1911, when the expedition was waiting to be taken from New Guinea. Again, on such a journey the food is all-important. "The consignments of rice for the first half-year," says Rawling, "arrived in sacks, and were consequently spoilt by the first shower of rain." Turn once again to Lorentz: "Our food-supplies, in order to keep them dry, were packed in soldered so-called paraffin tins." More than this, the party were supplied, on their entry into this tropical region, with cold-weather stores from the Shackleton Antarctic expedition, "such necessities as sugar, candles, &c.," being omitted. Now, of course, the organisation of this expedition (which arrived in New Guinea at the beginning of 1910) could not benefit by Lorentz's experiences in 1909; but the point is that, in 1909, Lorentz was putting to good use the lessons of his earlier journeys, and it is hard to understand why Mr. Goodfellow (the leader), Captain Rawling, and their colleagues, should not have been given the benefit of his knowledge and experience. Lorentz himself appears to share this view. "Perhaps," he says, "they made too light of the difficulties in the way of travelling in New Guinea; but they might have taken advantage of what, in late years, has been done." On all this Captain Rawling writes very temperately.

Despite all hardships and discouragements, the explorers toiled on for fifteen months, making their collections, studying the natives, prospecting for a better river, groping through forests, where they could not see twenty yards ahead, pushing into the foot-hills and the lower mountain slopes, where the little men were found, and occasionally returning to the river-mouth, whence a view of the snow mountains could be obtained, for there was none to be had on the Mimika River or in the forest zone about it. In the first year there was rain on 330 days; four times the native village of Pariman, where the advanced base was planted, was swept away by floods; malaria, beri-beri, and other diseases attacked the expedition, so that of the four hundred men engaged, 12 per cent. died in the country, 83 per cent. were invalided out of it, and only eleven men lasted out until the end. We must, indeed, admire the resolution of the men who, posted in this pestilent region of forest, river, and swamp, exposed to sudden and torrential inundations which would sometimes drive even the savages to get into their canoes and seek some other home, hung doggedly on, determined to reach at least the threshold of the mountains. And this they did. Early in February, 1911, at a height of 5,600 feet, they gained a narrow ridge, with the ground dropping sheer away on either side. Alas! a mist hid from them both North and South. Back to the camp, therefore, and the ration set aside for the last day of the advance is divided into two, since go back they will not without at least another effort to view the peaks they might not reach. Next morning they are away before sunrise, for an hour's sun would bring the mists and destroy their hopes. Scrambling, climbing, at last running, they gain the open ridge and find not a cloud in the sky. The plane-table is set up (Captain Rawling was chief surveyor to the expedition), the position

of various points is taken, the map is filled in, and then "we sat and gazed and gazed."

"From the distant outline of the coast almost to our feet, and from the Charles Louis Mountains in the far West for another fifty miles, to where the rugged slopes of Mount Carsternz closed the view in the East, the interminable jungle stretched unbroken. It was through this dark and almost trackless forest, hideous in its monotony, that we had been attempting to force our way for so many weeks. Not a single break was there, not a clearing, not a lake or grassy plain, nothing but the black and forbidding forest, shrouding the bogs and fetid vapors which lay beneath, and tenanted only by birds of gorgeous plumage, by snakes, and other creeping things. Through this interminable growth turned and twisted great rivers."

So much for the Southward view. To the North lay the ring of mountains, of which Mount Godman (9,500 feet) is the highest. Then,

"Beyond this, standing out hard and clear, rose the great precipice, the southern face of the central range, which divides this land into two parts, the northern and the southern. Black and forbidding towered the great cliff, seared and scarred with the passing of ages, and forming a barrier which at this point would defy any efforts of man to scale. . . . The highest point is Mount Leonard Darwin, a castellated peak near the centre, with an altitude of 14,000 ft. above sea-level. The face here has a clear drop of little short of 10,000 ft., or about 1½ miles—far and away the greatest precipice on earth."

On the whole, it was a most fruitful expedition, and will in many ways increase our knowledge of Dutch New Guinea and its peoples. Of the natives, whom the whole expedition appear to have treated in an admirable spirit, Captain Rawling gives most interesting descriptions. And if the explorers failed in their hope to reach the snows, perhaps their colleague, Wollaston, who is again making the attempt—"this time," says the author, drily, "with a well-equipped and perfectly organised expedition"—will win the final success. If he does, it will be largely due to his work with the expedition of 1910-1911, whose doings are so well, so graphically, and so modestly described in this excellent book.

A COMEDIAN.

"From Studio to Stage: Reminiscences of Weedon Grossmith." Written by HIMSELF. (Lane. 16s. net.)

THE neat, little man, dapper and strenuous at once, with the keen face that he can change into so many other faces, is one of the truly live and artistic creatures in comedy and farce. We have heard playgoers say what luck he has in getting parts that suit him. Not a bit of it; the proper compliment is that he suits his art exactly to the part he has to play. He began life as a portrait-painter (have we not seen him at Burlington House?), and it is a living and most finished portrait that he always presents upon the stage.

Moreover, Mr. Weedon Grossmith has enjoyed none of the advantages of the popular performer in the high romantic line. Not to him has it been given to stand on the terrace in the limelight, in a plumed hat and cloak, and sweep the stalls and boxes with a flashing glance; or to place his back against the wall, whip out his rapier, and exclaim: "The lady is in my care. I am for you, gentlemen!" No; Mr. Grossmith has indeed played Hamlet, and drawn tears in the character; but they were tears of mirth; for Mr. Grossmith's Hamlet was that very freakish party conceived by Gilbert. Of course, also we have seen him in "immaculate" evening clothes (was he not the first comedian to display the crease in the trousers of the dress suit?); but even in this attire he has been more familiar with the rôle of the foolish lord than with that of the titled hero. With the eye of fancy we chiefly see him rushing or being rushed through doors and windows, sliding under tables, diving into beds; or, like

"Katerfelto, with his hair on end."

Hear Mr. Grossmith himself concerning one of his usual "entrances."

"Enter Mr. Plackett." He is described in the part as 'a cadaverous, overdressed cnd, with a pale face and weak-looking eyes, and is puffing a cigar in a pretentious manner.' He leans over the gate, not seeing the Juvenile, and says to Letty: 'Ullo, Lett! You and I, nobody by; what?' Then he sees the poor Juvenile. 'I didn't see you. My gain, your loss. Hook! Twig! Two's com., three's none. Got your

hair cut!" The Juvenile clenches his fist and retires, Plackett grins, puffs smoke, and continues, "Well, Lett, has the old man come to his senses?"

"Lett (nearly crying): 'Old Man!'"

"Plackett: 'Yes, your father. Is it me and you and happiness, and the old house and ground are still yours, or do I foreclose the mortgage on the estate and you marry your canvas-spoiling friend, and hash it for dinner evermore, Amen. Will you marry me?'"

This example, adds Mr. Grossmith, "is in no way an exaggeration of what is expected of me, or of the many parts I have played."

But what absorbs the spectator, rightly attuned, is the perfection of the art in which the player's own identity is completely lost.

After a great success across the Atlantic, in that very diverting little piece, "A Pantomime Rehearsal," Mr. Grossmith failed at the Gaiety, was admonished by the gallery to return to his easel, did so, and languished for a period, until Henry Irving summoned him by wire to the Lyceum. He played Jacques Strop to Irving's Robert Macaire—a terrible test; but the audience took to him at once, and Irving made his flesh creep. At the Lyceum, he says:—

"I kept my eyes and ears pretty wide open. Art came first with Irving, it came before everything. What a contrast to the theatre opposite, where I had last played. The Lyceum was permeated with art, absolutely regardless of the business aspect, and the association and surroundings made me feel very proud that I was an actor, and in such company."

The pervading influence of the Lyceum was not exactly that of Drury Lane. At "The Lane," Mr. Grossmith figured in one of the sublime melodramas of the autumn; having first taken out "an accident insurance policy for a large sum." It was the real Drury Lane article: real dogcart for Mr. Grossmith to make his entrance in, real racehorse for him to "scratch," real porters from "the Garden" to maul him for scratching it, and oceans of real water to flood the stage when the dam burst; the very thing, in short, that the great Mr. Raleigh himself once seriously described to a serious interviewer as "a serious contribution to dramatic literature."

"I shall never forget," says Mr. Grossmith, "that first night, when the flood commenced. Tons of rice and spangles poured from the side to indicate the bursting of the dam. Children floated by, clinging to barrels and floating trees, screaming and yelling, especially as some of them got frightened, and, tipping sideways, fell down the trap, to be caught by the men underneath. Then the boat-house, with myself hanging outside from the roof, commenced to wobble, and then the whole structure toppled over, and a huge floating tree—with a well-concealed mattress—passed by, and Somerset and myself jumped on to it and were supposed to be saved as the curtain descended slowly."

"One night the tree passed too quickly for us to jump on, and we were both drowned!"

But Drury Lane is a wonderful place, and has its mastermind, as the Lyceum had. We may well believe that

"it requires a remarkable man like Arthur Collins to keep such a gigantic staff in order as he does, so that the great theatre, with its huge productions, is working as smoothly as a perfectly-made machine."

We believe we are right in adding that Irving himself had the highest opinion of and regard for Mr. Collins.

In time Mr. Weedon Grossmith wrote his own plays (and often has laughter held its sides over them), and then began the quest for the "backer." Of the backers, or financiers, whose aid is indispensable to theatrical enterprise, he gives us several amusing sketches. There was the Gold King from Australia, "who apparently owned gold mines by the dozen"; and at the dinner party given by Mr. Grossmith in his honor, roused the cupidity of the influential guests by the display of a sample nugget. The influential guests forgot all about the "Jack Sheppard" play that Mr. Grossmith wanted the Gold King to finance, and were anxious only to know how they could get into the mine that had yielded the nugget.

"Then I heard him saying, 'I don't care a d— who has the shares. It's first come first served with me, and Mr. Grossmith's friends shall have the first cut in. I like the little chap, I've taken a fancy to him.' There was a lot more talk, and more wine for my guests, but not for the Gold King; he never touched a drop, and left us dead sober, as he came, but not before he had succeeded in lumbering a large quantity of more or less worthless shares on my friends. . . . He got all the capital he required, and returned to his gold fields. I need hardly say he didn't put up a penny for 'Jack Sheppard.'"

Sometimes, of course, as on the turf, the backer backs a winner. The gentleman who made himself responsible for "The New Boy" put up a thousand pounds, and received as his share of the profits fifteen thousand pounds. Farce is the thing. The cost of production is usually small, the expenses are usually small in proportion; "so that if the farce should catch on (ten to one it doesn't), it is the biggest money-maker, theatrically, that I know of."

Mr. Weedon Grossmith, one of the best-endowed members of a family that has been entertaining us since the 'sixties of the last century (the father was very popular on the lecture-platform) has once again contributed to the gaiety of the nation.

LORD, WHAT FOOLS . . . !

"The Happy Warrior." By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON. (Rivers, 6s.)

"The Sporting Instinct." By MARTIN SWAYNE. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

"Hocken and Hunken: A Tale of Troy." By "Q." (Blackwood. 6s.)

"The Toll of the Tides." By THEODORE GOODRIDGE ROBERTS. (Laurie. 6s.)

"Bernardine." By ROSINA FILIPPI. (Duckworth. 6s.)

"The Three Destinies." By J. A. T. LLOYD. (Paul. 6s.)

PUCK, the eternal sprite, in his passing contempt for the lovers lost in a wood near Athens, uttered a line of wisdom which is at the kernel of pessimism. Fools, indeed! When middle-age looks back on the ardors and futilities of lost youthfulness, on the splendid carelessness, the sighing-like furnaces, and other doings of the gay, green, and golden age, Puck's line brings balm. So, too, when old-age looks back on middle-age, it is the same. Lord, what fools . . . ! Well, Puck and the pessimist have not all the best of it: and though most of us are what Carlyle said we were, there is another aspect of the truth. These novels reflect something of the follies, qualities, and wise doings of mortal women and men; but, certainly, the folly of our adventures, peradventures, misadventures, is in them most apparent. It is not difficult to imagine Puck at his pranks on the people of these books, who are very fairly representative of humanity. Mr. Hutchinson, whose reputation, founded by his first book, is solidly established by this, gives us in "The Happy Warrior" as good a picture of the manly man as we can hope to see. For Percival, the true Lord Burdon, had the pluck which, with all the world reeling, would go on. This was proved time and again; in those small days when the Pocket Marvel made his conquests at the "little nose" farm; later when he went on the gypsy-wandering and belonged to an old profession; then, in that fisticuff fight, as stirring as any battle of pugilism fought in the pages of fiction, when he downed Foxy Pinsent; and finally, in that best effort of all when he won his greatest victory. "The Happy Warrior" is as pleasant a book as can be hoped for. It tells a forceful, spacious tale, and after a somewhat leisurely opening goes like a rocket to a brilliant climax. Many sorts of people play out this drama together; and all, except, perhaps, Hegbert 'Unt, who is rather overdrawn, are successfully realised. Of the minor characters, old Amber makes a particular gracious figure. A happy book. It moves as well as entertains.

Passing to Mr. Martin Swayne's novel, "The Sporting Instinct," is like entering a new and less natural world, for instead of the breezes, star-shine, and hills, the naked passions of angry men and the kindness of gentle women, we have a drawing-room atmosphere, with warm lights, brilliant conversation, and a thread of intrigue. The Ellershawes are a childless couple with social pretensions. They belong to the suburban *élite*, which knows when to be purblind. All is well until something in the City goes wrong, and they have to move to a small house in a minor place. Their little weaknesses then grow strong—and Puck would find in their new ideas and circumstances ample scope for mischievous mirth. Mrs. Ellershawe is not only attractive, but much too clever for her husband, whose self-satisfied fatuousness is most amusingly, cruelly, depicted. There enters a languid baronet, with quite the old-style gift for naughtiness and epigram, who sets himself to conquer the heart of the apt-to-be-rebellious Nancy. Fortunately,

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the sporting instinct—"you can't analyse it, and for that reason no one understands quite what it means"—pulls her through. If it had not pulled her through, things might have been even tragically wrong; but there it was, and so we come to a sufficient ending. Mr. Swayne has given us so brilliant a book that it bears re-reading, especially as its insistent subtlety is apt to hide much of the cleverness. His people are amusing types, whose actions sometimes pass into the region of farce; but none of them are really nice. They are fully conscious of belonging to the suburban *élite*.

"Hocken and Hunken" are sea-captains, come home to settle down in adjoining cottages, with gardens, a joint housekeeper, good 'bacca, a parrot, and a musical-box. How happy they might have been, blessed Adams in a Cornish Eden, if Woman had not come creeping in! Mrs. Bosenna was their landlady, and a widow. Although already possessed of a jealous admirer, a son of the soil, she set her cap at the shipmates. The captains were gradually drawn from their comradeship. Their housekeeper, Mrs. Bowdler, a person of highly assertive respectability, had a beast of a time managing for them, when they drifted into open rivalry and became objects for the laughter of Troy. There is something painful in the picture of these good asses making exhibitions of themselves. They were so keenly jealous of, and antagonistic to, one another that no limit could be placed on their acts against each other; so that sometimes the bounds even of absurdity are passed. The end is, of course, inevitable; and, as things proved, Cai Hocken and Bias Hunken were fortunate to be disappointed. Sir Arthur Quiller Couch has done well; but daring this particular theme, he has challenged comparison with Mr. Jacobs, and sometimes suggested possibilities of more laughter than he has roused. But still, we must not grumble even in the faintest and most distant way, for "Hocken and Hunken" is full of fun; it is written with finish and high spirits, and is a jolly antidote to such weariness of mind as comes to most of us, sometimes, in a grey, ungenerous world.

We have the reality of life, the drenching of seas, the destructive force of the winds, in Mr. T. G. Roberts's "The Toll of the Tides." This seems to be a first book—it has some of the crudities of an original effort—but is highly promising. The plot is laid in Newfoundland, where fog and the furies of the tide and gale are regnant and raging. Black Dennis Nolan is a masterly man, who makes wrecking a fine art. He rigs up a great net, which steals from the sea what otherwise would be lost to man, and in many other respects distinguishes himself from the ruck of wreckers who can only gather and keep what flotsam and jetsam is brought to them. He has enforced his ascendancy by discipline and the use of an amazing fist; then his best-laid schemes gang a-gley, through a singing-wench rescued from a beached derelict. How this lady of lighted eyes makes havoc of his intentions, we need not suggest. Fortunately for the skipper, there is another damsel—this one perfect—prepared to receive his kisses. "The Toll of the Tides" is a strong book. Its passing inadequacies are the result of inexperience. When Mr. Roberts has learned how to use his incidents to advantage, and better to control coincidence, he will do well in a department of fiction where strong work is ever welcome.

Miss Filippi, like good wine, needs no bush to advertise her literary qualities. "Bernardine" is, though no one would guess so until well through with it, a novel with a purpose—a tract with a moral, though, unlike much of the literature of religious propagandists, this tract is worth reading for its own sake. What Miss Filippi's motive is, we will not say, especially as we do not agree with it. Portman Leyton is truly remarkable—a sort of archangel with a gift for conjuring. The only fault he seems to confess to is a tendency to Baconianism. He befriends a feckless Irishman and his wife, who start honeymoon with every prospect of shipwreck before them, and eventually finds outlet for the genius of both. He does other exceptional deeds, and altogether, besides being helpful to many and sundry, is the very reverse of a plaster saint. The joy of the book is its irresponsibility. The easiest way to damn it would be to outline its plot. It has energy, humor, wit—it is perfectly impossible, and yet enjoyable. The side-lights on stage-life are revealing and something cruel. Bernardine herself is a lay-figure.

Mr. Lloyd has subtlety, as is evident in his novel, "The Three Destinies"; but he has not yet the means of making it effective. His plot is, however, one which would try the powers of a master; for the idea of bringing back people, generally strangers to each other, to meet in a room at the British Museum, after various intervals of years, to show how they have developed, is, to say the least of it, clumsy. Mr. Lloyd has wrestled in masterful manner with his theme, but he has something to learn. His characters are not sufficiently defined, and he lets his clever pen run away with him, as when he writes: "As their eyes met, the globulous lips of the cleric pursed succulently, and, through their crinkled, fleshy sockets, the small eyes glowed in gleeful deprecation." Here was a chance for Puck!

BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"Margaret Ethel MacDonald: A Memoir." By J. RAMSAY MACDONALD. (Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d. net.)

MR. MACDONALD's vivid and touching sketch of the life and character of his wife will be welcomed by all who had the good fortune to know her. This is perhaps the highest praise that can be given to such a book as this. It is a very intimate picture, and yet none of her friends will feel that the natural anxiety of her husband to let the world know what was the secret of her influence, has led him to say too much. Perhaps the most important achievement of her busy life was the initiation of the Women's Labor League. Her chief fellow-worker in that cause was Mrs. Mary Middleton, a woman of a rare and intrepid spirit, who died not long before her, and whose name will always be associated with hers in the history of that hopeful democratic enterprise. The few pages in this volume in which Mrs. Simm describes Mrs. MacDonald's visit to a district Conference in the early days of the League illustrate very well her special gift. She had good judgment, the power of assimilating facts and grasping their significance, extraordinary capacity for hard and continuous work, and a steady and direct mind, that made her invaluable in the bewildering atmosphere of a committee's deliberations. But it was not any one of these qualities, or even her wonderful courage and energy, that gave her her special position in the social movement of her time. It was rather her natural and sincere character, which, escaping all the little affectations that so often ensnare good and disinterested natures when they find themselves in a strange world, retained its spontaneous integrity and candor through all changes of circumstances and surroundings. Her own happiness was no secret. Mr. MacDonald's book shows that she could never find contentment until she found a religion of duty, and having found it, she devoted herself to its service with a simple faith that brightened her life and friendships, and all her dealings with others. Many people of the class from which she came, when they find a social or philosophical mission in life, grow a little inconsiderate of the claims of others, and in particular of the claims of the poor to sincerity and respect in all relations. Mrs. MacDonald was conspicuously free from this. Her sympathy was never touched with condescension or self-consciousness, and the happiness that she spread around her was the gift of a certain noble simplicity of mind and character.

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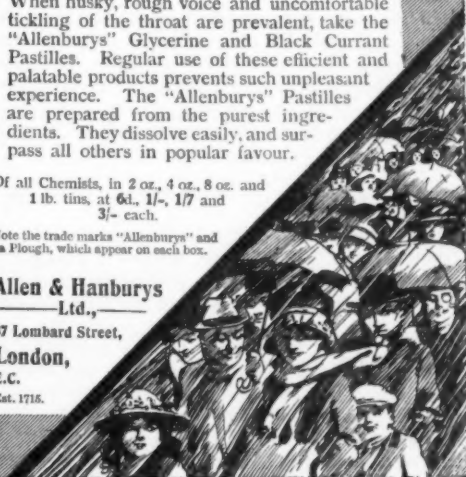
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tion. The continuance of war in the Balkans only adds to the size of the loans which will be required to prop up Turkey, Greece, and the Slav States. The continuance of Austro-Russian mobilisation is even more depressing, though against this may now be set hopes of an Anglo-German understanding. The fierce fighting in Mexico City and Tokio have, of course, caused Mexican and Japanese securities to be sold. The life has gone out of Wall Street, where the trouble in Mexico naturally causes anxiety. Money has been tight, and though there may now be a short spell of comparative ease, no reduction in Bank rate can be hoped for. Consols have been depressed by the New Zealand loan, though, in the opinion of the Stock Exchange, a 4 per cent. stock at 98 is much too dear for present conditions. Trade is still tremendously active, though the iron and steel men seem to see some signs of a falling off. Dear money, of course, is bound to check speculative purchases.

MEXICO AND JAPAN.

The past week has brought with it dangerous crises in both Mexico and Japan, two countries in which British investors are deeply interested, and securities are naturally depressed. It would not be surprising—though, of course, no accurate statistics are available—to hear that at least fifty millions sterling of British capital have been lent to each of these countries; and, besides this, there are, of course, many British firms who have establishments and branches in Japan, and, to a smaller extent, in Mexico. In Mexico City there is quite a large British and Canadian colony, though the Americans are still more numerous, and are represented by the "Mexican Herald," a paper of considerable influence and importance. Mexico is the only important country, except Canada, outside the United States in which the American Stock Exchanges are much interested. The Canadians control some light and power concerns and tramways, into which, of course, they have drawn large amounts of British capital. In the Mexican Government loans and railways, British, French, and American investors are all involved. Hence the long period of chaos and civil war which has followed the deposition and flight of President Diaz has caused much concern. The revolution in the capital, by which President Madero seems to have been overthrown, may lead to the intervention of the United States; but anything like an occupation of Mexico is probably impossible, for the Americans dare not contemplate the addition of an immense colored vote and the introduction of half-caste members into Congress. The crisis in Japan is caused by the failure of Prince Katsura to control the Diet. His predecessor, Marquis Saionji, was thrown out of office by the refusal of the military authorities to co-operate with him after his rejection of the proposals for an increase of the army. Prince Katsura seems to have persuaded the young Emperor to bring the military men to reason; but the Diet naturally resented the unconstitutional overthrow of the Saionji's Ministry, and popular opinion has run strongly against Katsura. The troubles culminated in great riotings in Tokio, where the offices of six newspapers, which supported Katsura, were smashed, and some lives lost. The mob was so formidable and the police so feeble, that Prince Katsura and his Cabinet have resigned. The weakness of Japanese bonds is due to anxiety as to the financial and political future of the country, which is suffering from a heavy burden of debt and taxes, as well as from these civil disorders.

STOCKS FOR THE SPECULATIVE INVESTOR.

One reason for the investor's neglect of the gilt-edged market is to be found in the success of the policy of the speculative investor during the past ten years or so. By the speculative investor I do not mean the man who buys something merely because its price is below the average of previous years, or because he thinks a particular section of the Stock Exchange has been neglected, and is due to boom before long. The true speculative investor thoroughly investigates the position of any security which seems attractive, and, having made up his mind that his dividends are fairly secure, he buys it, and is content with the income from it until either its merits have become patent enough for it to command a higher price, or something unforeseen

occurs to make it undesirable to keep the security longer. The best investment trust company manager in the City makes a mistake sometimes, but by careful selection he earns for his company a good income and an appreciation of capital value. The speculative investor has to be prepared for losses on some of his purchases, and once he is sure that a stock is likely to fall, he should cut a small loss rather than hang on in the hope of a recovery, from some unseen cause. Above all things, he must not "go with the crowd." Stockbrokers' advice always suffers because it reflects the market view of the moment, and they recommend things which are good at the time, in preference to things which are suffering from neglect. Thus, when Consols were high and rising, they were freely bought, now they are low and have depreciated, and are left alone. Japanese bonds were very popular only three years ago, when the yield was $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. or less. Now they yield 5, and are not considered attractive. The speculative investor finds his best bargains among industrials because records of their finance are available. Foreign Government stocks rise and fall largely through fashions. No one can say whether Chili's credit will be worth more or less in ten years' time than it is now, even though her financial position undergoes no change at all. With an industrial, however, the discerning investor may often see signs of improvement in finance long before it is sufficient to show itself in dividends, or even in profits, for industrial balance-sheets well repay careful study. I have made the following list of investments yielding round about 6 per cent., which all offer attractions; but I am afraid space will preclude my pointing out all the reasons for which they may be considered cheap to buy and hold. But, of course, they are not to be called safe.

	Div.	Share.	Price.	Yield.
			£	%
Apollinaris Cum. Pref.	5	10	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Associated Cement 2nd Debs.	5	Stk	91	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Consol Goldfields 2nd Pref.	6	1	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Frederick Hotels Deb. Stock	4	Stk.	64 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Gordon Hotels Deb. Stock	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	Stk.	62 $\frac{1}{2}$	6
General Electric Co. Cum. Pref.	6	10	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
London General Omnibus Income Deb.	5	Stk.	95	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Debenture Corporation Pref.	5	Stk.	88 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Thornycroft (J. L.) Cum. Pref.	6	1	18/6	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
South Durham Steel & Iron Cum. Pref.	6	1	1	6
Savoy Hotel "Strand" Deb. Stock.	5	Stk.	72 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$

In the first place, all these concerns have been going some time, and the dividends or interest payments on the securities listed above are covered by substantial margins. In some instances, like Apollinaris, Frederick and Gordon Hotels, and to a less extent, Savoy Hotel and Debenture Corporation, the total capitals are large, and it is certain are not fully represented by tangible assets. But Apollinaris is paying 7 per cent. on over a million of ordinary capital. Frederick Hotels debentures are protected by a $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. dividend on £500,000 of preference stock, and Savoy debentures by £250,000 of 7 per cent. preference, and £307,800 of ordinary receiving 5 per cent. regularly. The Debenture Corporation has £1,000,000 of capital behind its preference stock, which has had 5 per cent. for a long time. Then we have stocks like Associated Cement, a company which has been struggling for years under a load of capital. The preference dividend, however, has always been earned and paid on 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions of capital; the company's prospects are regarded so highly that its ordinary capital is valued at about another $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions, so that its debentures are soundly secured, and have good prospects of improving. Thornycroft and South Durham are iron and steel companies which have profited by the trade boom, and both earned over 20 per cent. on their ordinary capital last year. General Electric Preference shares used to carry only 5 per cent. dividends, and though the rate was increased last year, the price has not risen proportionately. Dividends of 5 per cent. on the ordinary capital have been paid for several years, and the company has been conservatively financed. Consolidated Goldfields 2nd Preference give a good return presumably because the ordinary dividends fluctuate. In the last ten years the dividend on the ordinary capital of £2,000,000 has been passed twice—in 1903 and 1906. In spite of this, however, the average dividend for the ten years is 17 per cent., and, as the 2nd Preference shares are cumulative, they are well protected.

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THE CAR AND GENERAL INSURANCE CO. LTD.

THE Annual Meeting of this Company was held on Tuesday, the 11th inst., Mr. E. MANVILLE presiding.

In moving the adoption of the Report, the Chairman said that the balance sheet showed substantial progress as compared with the previous year. Since they commenced operations in 1903 they had had to fight, in consequence of many unforeseen events, an extremely uphill fight, in order to establish the Corporation. They had succeeded in spite of difficulties, which, he believed, had been greater than the one which had assailed any other similar enterprise in the history of insurance during the past thirty years. No sooner was their Company formed, and was well into its stride, than the insurance world was agitated by the flotation of an even increasing number of new insurance companies, formed without any apparent or sufficient reason. The larger number of these companies, as might have been expected, came to an unhappy end. From 1903-9 no less than 95 new insurance companies were registered, and, in the great majority of cases, went to allotment. Incredible as it might seem, only nineteen of these enterprises, including the Car and General, retained their independence to-day. In 1907 the new Workmen's Compensation Act came into force. They and everybody else were unable to anticipate the revolutionary decisions of the Courts in regard to the meaning of that Act. These decisions had cost the insurance companies some 25 per cent. more in compensation than might have been reasonably expected. These troubles, however, were now passed, rates had been raised, so that the Workmen's Compensation Act should now be a source of strength, instead of a cause for anxiety. Their motor-car insurance business had shown a satisfactory profit for each one of the nine years the company had been in existence; but the business was a distinct and difficult branch of insurance. The great number of companies which had gone into this specialised business, he felt, would regret their entrance into it. The Report was agreed to.

BOVRIL, LIMITED.

A RECORD YEAR.

PRESIDING at the annual general meeting of Bovril Ltd. held on the 12th inst., The Earl of Erroll, K.T., C.B., (Chairman), in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said that never in the history of the Company had Bovril sold so well as in the year 1912, the sales being far ahead of all previous records. The rate of increase for the two years, 1911-12, had been greater than that of any two previous years, and he was pleased to say that the sales for January were also well ahead of all records for that month. This, he thought, was convincing proof that the food value and body-building powers of Bovril were being more widely recognised. Like all other commercial concerns, they had experienced considerable increase in the cost of manufacture during the last year. Bottles, boxes, and packing materials had all gone up in price. The demand for cattle had increased enormously all over the world, and when they remembered that it required about four pounds of beef to make a 2 oz. bottle of Bovril, they would judge the effect upon their profits from any increase in the cost of cattle. Dealing with the balance-sheet, he said that after the payment of the interest charges and the fixed dividends of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the Preference Shares, and 7 per cent. on the Ordinary Shares, there was available for distribution £171,105 4s. 6d., which they decided to apportion by placing £27,500 to reserve, paying an increased dividend of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the Deferred Shares, absorbing a similar amount, and to carry forward £13,323 19s. 6d. Their reserve would then stand at £240,000. He felt sure that they would all agree that it was in the best interests of the Company to strengthen their reserve. He knew they would be sorry to hear that Mr. Andrew Walker, whose faithful services to the Company were well-known and appreciated by the shareholders, was, owing to illness, prevented from being with them that day. He had some time ago written a letter proposing to resign his seat on the Board, a position which he has occupied since the formation of the Company. He was pleased to inform them, however, that at the unanimous request of his colleagues, Mr. Walker, whilst resigning the Managing Directorship, consented to retain his seat as an ordinary Director of the Company. He felt sure that they would all join with him in wishing Mr. Walker a speedy and complete recovery. Mr. Douglas Walker, who had been Joint Managing Director for the past six years, would, in future, act as Managing Director. Virol Ltd., in which the Company had a substantial interest, continued to make satisfactory progress, that company having paid a dividend of 10 per cent. for the past financial year, as against $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for the previous twelve months. He was informed that the use of Virol in hospitals and sanatoriums was steadily increasing, and the reports on Virol from these institutions were most satisfactory.

Mr. George Lawson Johnston, in seconding the resolution, said that Lord Erroll had mentioned the progress of Bovril, and he would like to add that last year's sales were over 5 per cent. greater than those of 1910, a fact which showed that their preparation had been a favourite with the British public for a quarter-of-a-century. In regard to Estates Control Ltd., they were aware that the Bovril Company had guaranteed the interest on the Preference Shares, and apart from the valuable work which that Company was doing for them, it was transacting profitable business on its own account, and during 1912 earned more than twice the amount required to cover its Preference dividend.

The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

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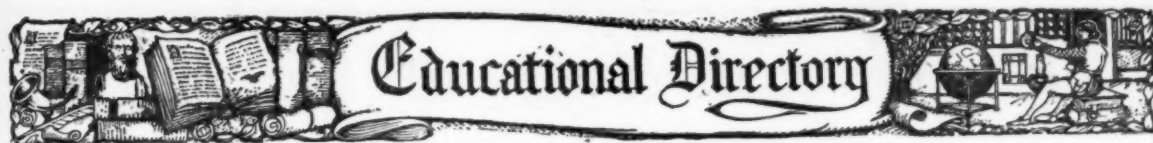
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